PATTERNS OF POWER · SYRACUSE

Syracuse

The complete study — a Greek city on the western frontier, from the Corinthian landing on Ortygia in 733 BC to the Roman sack of 212: a landscape and twelve modules on what an order becomes when almost nothing stands between a man and whoever holds the citadel

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with Claude (Anthropic) · 2026

held as tested, not revealed

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PREFACE AND OUTLINE

Front matter · how this study was made, the discipline it holds to, what it returned to the framework, and a map of its thirteen parts

The collaboration

This is a case study in the Patterns of Power series, applying the series' framework to the Greek city of Syracuse — from the Corinthian landing on Ortygia in 733 BC to the Roman sack of 212, five hundred and twenty-one years in which the city changed its apex at least eight times and redistributed its own territory six. The framework is a lens for reading how any order of power is founded, dressed and held: the floor of force beneath every order, the robe of belief laid over the floor to make the force cheap, the settlement that divides the spoils, the cost column in which each subject prices defection, the formation that installs what a child takes for granted, the default by which an elite defends the whole arrangement by defending each man's own place, and — running through all of it — position-logic, the proposition that rulers in like positions converge on like solutions because a position poses a problem with only a few good answers.

Syracuse was chosen as the third of the series' Greek cases, after Athens and Sparta, and it turned out to be something the brief had not anticipated. The series was written for European colonial conquests, and its colonial predictions — a robe cut for a distant metropole, formation withheld from a conquered majority, a seam split in two by distance, a collapse arriving when a faraway will empties — did not survive contact with the sources. An archaic Greek *apoikia* was a sovereign polis from the day its allotments were paced out. Archias sailed from Corinth and Corinth never governed Syracuse; the demonstration is that the Bacchiad regime which sent him was overthrown at home in 657 and nothing whatever happened to the colony. There was no metropole.

Once that is granted the case becomes more useful than a variation. Syracuse had no land register, no cadastre, no deed, no archive of conveyances, no court of title; no chartered council, no independent priestly corporation, no senate, nothing that outlived its members and held property in its own name; no law of succession, no standing administration until the third century, and no inscribed public record of its own decisions. Every other case in this collection has several of these and most have all

of them. Syracuse had a popular assembly, a revered penal code, a citadel and a payroll. What this study measures, module by module, is what an order does when almost nothing stands between a man and whoever currently holds the rock at the mouth of the harbour.

The study was built the way the series is built, one module at a time. The author brought the framework, the direction and the judgement of the whole, and held the collaboration to its disciplines; Claude, Anthropic's model, did the research — verifying every load-bearing quotation, date and figure by search against a source reproducing the primary text before any module was written — and produced the drafts, each presented and confirmed before the next was begun. The framework's concepts are the series'; the Syracusan application, and the refinements it yielded, are the work of the collaboration.

Its spine was corrected twice against the author's reading, and both corrections are carried through. The first concerned formation: the model had read the disappearance of the Sicels as a refutation of the framework's claim that a conqueror who withholds his own formation leaves the old one holding the field. That was wrong, and wrong in a way worth recording, because it had forgotten the prior proposition that there is no unformed person — that a self cannot be blank, and a child deprived of one set of trusted authorities acquires another. The correct finding is that the clause has an unstated condition, and Syracuse is the case that exposes it. The second concerned change: the model had written the expulsion of the landed aristocracy in 485 as a successful rising from below, which is what the episode looks like if one asks who held the city rather than whether the settlement moved. The aristocracy withdrew intact to a fortress it already owned in the middle of its own estates, and was fully restored within a few years by an imported professional army. That is an interregnum, not an overthrow, and mistaking the one for the other is precisely the dignifying myth assembling itself out of an event that did not happen.

The discipline

Public-domain primary sources — laws, decrees, dedications, inscriptions, and the speeches and documents the ancient historians preserve — are quoted exactly, in the original where the wording carries the argument, because in a legal fiction the precise words are the evidence; modern copyrighted scholarship is paraphrased, briefly, and credited. No quotation, date, attribution or figure is invented or reconstructed from memory: what cannot be verified is dropped or flagged, and contested figures are given as ranges.

This case required one further discipline more heavily than most, and it is stated here because it governs every number in the book. Almost everything between 480 and 289 reaches us through Diodorus Siculus, a first-century BC Sicilian compiling at three to four centuries' distance from two lost historians who hated each other: Philistus, who financed Dionysius into power, commanded his citadel, wrote his history during a banishment the tyrant imposed, and died fighting for the son; and Timaeus, whose father refounded Tauromenium out of the survivors of a city a Syracusan tyrant had destroyed, who was himself exiled by another Syracusan tyrant, and who spent fifty years in Athens attacking Philistus. Diodorus' large round numbers are markers meaning *an army ceased to exist* or *a city was destroyed*, and are reported here as such rather than as arithmetic. Where a claim rests on a single late witness, the text says so at the point of use rather than in a note. The confidence setting throughout is lower than the corpus is used to, and deliberately so.

The engine is the method of information asymmetry — the exact public words set beside the exact words of the ground, the arithmetic laid out and the sum left to the reader. Suffering is held with gravity, and the study refuses both flattery and demonisation, naming the legal fiction as fiction and explaining the order's logic without excusing it; its watchword is *legibility is not pardon*. Every module returns a refinement to the framework, stated plainly in its closing section. And the pattern is held as tested, not revealed — a lens laid over the record, a tendency and never a law.

What this study added to the framework

Because it is the corpus's control experiment in the near-absence of instruments, the case could name things the documented conquests could not.

That the elaborateness of a settlement's legal fiction measures the constraint on the settler rather than the gentleness of the settlement — so that a study reading a conquest's decency off the scrupulousness of its paperwork has the sign of the relation backwards. Where no metropole must be persuaded, the dispossession is stated in a participle.

That a settlement re-sources title only if there is a source: where a holding has no warrant outside the ruler's person, the settlement buys loyalty to a man and cannot buy loyalty to an order, and must therefore be made again from nothing every time a man falls.

That a robe is cut to whatever audience can withhold something the holder needs — and that legitimacy bought from a peer group buys standing among rulers without buying obedience from the ruled, the two being unconvertible in either direction.

That withholding formation preserves a conquered order only where the apparatus that transmits it is also left standing; that formation has a material and demographic base which can be destroyed by measures taken for reasons that have nothing to do with belief; and that withhold-and-preserve and withhold-and-destroy are two decisions where the corpus had been treating one.

That there is a fourth dial beside cost, benefit and belief — the capacity of the ruled to know and trust one another, which determines whether the ledger is calculated alone or together, and which a ruler can attack immediately, unlike force which must be paid for monthly and formation which takes a generation.

That a ruler lacking an external guarantee of his own position must suppress the elite coordination that would produce a default, and that the suppression prevents the construction of the instruments that would have supplied the guarantee — so the absence reproduces itself across regimes of every constitutional description.

That an open door protects the individual and prevents the institution: exit holds extraction below the bone, and a faction that can leave never has to bargain, so the stalemate that produces charters never forms.

That liberties are what a claimant takes when it is strong enough to take something and too numerous to be bought off individually, generality being a technical requirement rather than a moral achievement; and that admission granted is not admission won, only the second leaving residue.

That extraction by ambush has a declining yield, because an unpredictable take makes visible wealth irrational — so a state living on it must periodically pay its own subjects to become taxable again; and that a published revenue rule is among the cheapest legitimating instruments in existence.

That where the floor of force is purchased it can be repurchased, so elite fracture ceases to be a rare crack and becomes the standing weather, which explains a rate of change no other case in the corpus has to account for; and that elite overproduction can be manufactured by enfranchisement rather than bred.

That the metabolic note can be called without an overshoot — a fertile land emptied of the coordination that worked it reverts, the debt being paid in abandonment rather than hunger — and that unlike an overshoot this form can be reversed by importing people.

And, gathering all of it: that the instrument which dispossesses is also the instrument which secures. A title sourced in a register can be taken by a court but not by a night of soldiers; a title sourced in nothing but possession can be taken by anything. A people without such instruments is not thereby free of dispossession. It is

dispossessed without paperwork, by whoever turns up, repeatedly, for five hundred years.

The arc

A landscape opening and twelve modules, each with a framework function and its own evocative title.

Landscape — the ground before the city. Having First Driven Out the Sicels. South-eastern Sicily and the Corinth that sent Archias: an islet with its own spring closing a great harbour, a hill country of village polities under kings who could be bought and villages that could be cleared, and a founding notice that records the dispossession as a participle because nobody was going to ask.

1 — The Floor of Force. Now That They Were Relieved of the War. How the decisive arm changed composition four times in three centuries; and why a city whose army faced outward and inward at once could not afford peace, so that a war became the cheapest robe available to a ruler whose soldiers had to be paid.

2 — The Settlement. The Power to Purchase Their Own Houses. Six comprehensive redistributions of the same ground, each one's beneficiaries the next one's dispossessed; and the single division that held, which was the one that priced the houses and let the sitting occupants buy their own back.

3 — The Robe. With No Force of Men. The horses at Olympia, the bronze at Delphi with its dedicant's title chiselled out, the herald announcing a tyrant as citizen of a city he had emptied — and a crowd at a festival that inspected the goods, laughed, and looted the tents.

4 — Formation. He Became a Suppliant of the City. What was forming a Sicel child, what happened to the apparatus that did it, and what filled the gap; with the Syracusan calendar, the portrait of the good subject that the city never produced, and a defeated king who staked his life on a Greek altar because by then he had no other idea of what a defeated man does.

5 — The Cost Column. To Prevent People From Knowing One Another. Why the ordinary man complied in a city where the door always stood open; the benefit column the tyrants filled and the propertied paid for; and the instrument both tyranny and democracy reached for first, which was neither force nor belief but the ability of neighbours to gauge one another.

6 — Extraction. A Golden Mantle Is Oppressive in Summer. A catalogue of devices with no rule in it, a livestock tax that destroyed its own base and had to bribe it back into existence, and a ruler stripping the gold his predecessor had dedicated out of the Carthaginian spoils in order to meet a payroll.

7 — Information and Suppression. Take Me Away to the Quarries. How an unfalsifiable accusation deposed a board of generals in a week; how a rich patron annulled the assembly's only penalty for dangerous speech by paying it indefinitely; and why almost everything in this book reaches us from two men who were driven out of Sicily.

8 — Elite Coordination and the Default. Why Should I Be Linked With Her? The loop: a ruler with no external guarantee cannot permit his own supporters to interlock, and the prohibition prevents the building of anything that would have guaranteed him — ending with a woman hunted through her own house, arguing correctly that she had never been inside the arrangement, to people who had no register with which to check.

9 — Plurality or Foreclosure. Armed Into the Place of Assembly. Five centuries of continuous popular assembly that voted in four tyrannies; the factional fight that produced the one durable code; the size of a claimant as the thing that determines whether it is paid in estates or in rules; and the three conditions that make a law more than words, each with its counter-example inside the same city.

10 — Change and Collapse. The Gate Beside the Fountain. Eight changes of apex, every one an elite fracture resolved in the mercenary market; the interregnum of 485 that was not a revolution; and an ending in which the population wanted to surrender and the bought floor would not let them.

11 — The Grim Accounting. Game in the Suburbs. What the arrangement cost in the sword and in the soil; a metabolic debt called by abandonment rather than overshoot; three besieging armies destroyed by the marshes at the head of the harbour; and a measurement of how differently a conquest is remembered depending on which side of it a man's grandfather stood.

12 — Convergence and Divergence. Only Interpreters of the Lawgiver. What Syracuse confirmed and what it broke; the strongest case that can be made for the arrangement by someone who lived inside it, stated at full strength and answered without flinching; and the two things in five hundred years that were inherited, and what they had in common.

Landscape · HAVING FIRST DRIVEN OUT THE SICELS

The ground before the city: south-eastern Sicily and the Corinth that sent Archias on the eve of 733 BC — the position taken, the order already standing on it, and the framework's first bend, that where no metropole must be persuaded the conquest is simply reported

The landscape that will not double

Every conquest study in this collection begins by reconstructing two grounds rather than one — the country invaded and the country that invaded it — because a conqueror who answers to a distant capital is a man managing two audiences at once, and the gap between what his force does on the ground and what his government says about it at home is the structural centre of the whole arrangement. The floor of force operates in the colony; the story of legitimacy is cut for the metropole, whose taxpayers vote the credits, whose deputies renew the mandate, and whose formed sons obey the order to embark. Take away the belief of that home population and the expensive apparatus loses its cheap foundation. So the modules that follow such a case are, in large part, an anatomy of concealment.

Syracuse breaks this at the first step, and the break is not an inconvenience to be worked around but the most useful thing the ground has to say.

Archias sailed from Corinth and Corinth never governed him. An archaic Greek *apoikia* — the word means a home away from home, not a possession — was a new and sovereign polis from the day its allotments were paced out. It kept the mother city's dialect, her calendar, her cults and a real sentimental precedence; it did not keep her magistrates, and there is no evidence anywhere that Corinth taxed Syracuse, garrisoned it, appointed to it, or could have compelled anything from it. The demonstration is available and it is clean. In 657 BC, seventy-six years after the foundation, the Bacchiad clan that had ruled Corinth was thrown out of the city by Cypselus, and the regime that had sent Archias ceased to exist. Nothing happened to Syracuse. A dependency notices when its metropole falls; Syracuse did not notice, because it was not one.

The consequence runs through the whole of what follows. There was no despatch to compose, no estimate to defend, no distant conscience whose furniture had to be rearranged before the ground could be taken. And it shows in the very first sentence

anybody ever wrote about the founding. Thucydides, opening his account of how Sicily came to be settled, disposes of the matter in a single clause:

> *Συρακούσας δὲ τοῦ ἐχομένου ἔτους Ἀρχίας τῶν Ἡρακλειδῶν ἐκ Κορίνθου ᾤκισε, Σικελοὺς ἐξελάσας πρῶτον ἐκ τῆς νήσου ἐν ᾗ νῦν οὐκέτι περικλυζομένη ἡ πόλις ἡ ἐντός ἐστιν.*
> *Syracuse was founded the year afterwards by Archias, one of the Heraclids from Corinth, who began by driving out the Siculians from the island upon which the inner city now stands, though it is no longer surrounded by water.*

Attend to the grammar, because the grammar is the finding. The dispossession is not the sentence. It is a participle — *Σικελοὺς ἐξελάσας*, having driven out the Sicels — attached to the main verb by the adverb *first*, in the way one might note that a builder cleared a site before laying foundations. No justification is offered. None appears to have been thought necessary, not by the Syracusans who preserved the tradition, not by Antiochus of Syracuse from whom Thucydides most probably took it, and not by Thucydides, who was capable of moral scruple about far smaller things. The eviction of a people from their ground is recorded as the preliminary that it was.

Set that beside the instruments the modern cases in this collection are built out of — the statute declaring an inhabited country legally vacant, the agreement granting a thousand chiefs the estates of which they are already in possession, the decree dissolving a collective holding into saleable shares — and the contrast is not one of decency. It is one of constraint. Those instruments are elaborate because somebody had to be satisfied. Nobody had to be satisfied here.

The ground itself, and what it would go on offering

The site chosen in 733 is a small limestone island lying across the mouth of a deep bay on the south-eastern corner of Sicily. The Greeks called it Ortygia, the quail-island, and it has three properties that between them will set the terms of five hundred years of Syracusan politics.

The first is fresh water. A spring rises on Ortygia within a few paces of the sea — the Greeks called it Arethusa and gave it a nymph — fed by a water table running beneath the island from the mainland and held up by impermeable clays. An island with its own water can be held when the mainland cannot. The second is the harbour. Ortygia forms the northern arm of what the ancients simply called the Great Harbour, a broad, deep, sheltered bay into which the Anapus and the Ciane flow, while between the island and the mainland to the north lies a second and smaller anchorage. Two harbours, one of them among the best in the western Mediterranean, at the point

where a ship coasting from Greece to Italy or from Africa to the Adriatic must in any case turn the corner of the island. The third is the ground behind. West and north of the harbour the land rises into a triangular limestone plateau, later called Epipolae, the place above; below and around it lie the coastal plain, the river valleys, and marshy flats along the Anapus. The plateau is quarriable, and the quarries — the *latomiai* — would give the city its building stone.

Read this as a position rather than a description, and one property dominates all the others: **Ortygia is a place a small number of armed men can hold against a large number of people who live nearby.** That is exactly what a hundred or two hundred Corinthians stepping ashore among an established agricultural population most needed, and it is why they took the islet before they took anything else. The property, however, does not attach to the Sicels. It attaches to the ground. It is still there when the Sicels have gone, when the city has spread across the causeway onto the mainland in the sixth century and grown into four mainland quarters, when the men on Ortygia are no longer a landing party but a garrison, and when the large number of people living nearby whom a small number of armed men might wish to hold at bay are the Syracusans themselves.

This is the plainest possible instance of what this project means by working with the materials at hand. Nobody designed Ortygia as an instrument of internal rule. A fortified island inside a city, walled against that city, is simply what the founding site becomes once the problem changes, and every man who later wanted the city will find the answer already built, already the oldest and most sacred quarter, already carrying the temples of Athena and Apollo — which is to say already impossible to characterise as an imposition, being the place the city started from. The same is true of Epipolae in reverse: the plateau commands the town, so an enemy who takes it besieges the city from above, and the whole later history of Syracusan fortification is the slow, expensive admission that a site chosen for a landing party is not a site chosen for a great city. And the same is true of the quarries, which begin as the source of the walls and end, within three centuries, as the place where seven thousand Athenian prisoners are kept until most of them die. A country's geology does not have intentions. It has affordances, and they outlast by centuries the problem for which they were first used.

The last item on the ground is the one that will most sharply distinguish this case from its nearest Greek neighbour in the collection. The plain behind Syracuse grows cereals, and so, on a scale mainland Greece could not approach, does much of the rest of the island. The settlers were not seizing a trading post that would have to be fed from elsewhere; they were seizing farmland, and the elite that emerged from the seizure would be a landed one. Whatever else Syracuse would later be short of — and it would

be chronically short of coin — it did not sit above the carrying capacity of its own soil, and no enemy could starve it by cutting a sea lane. That single fact removes the dependency on which a neighbouring maritime power's whole existence turned, and the study should expect the metabolic column to read very differently here.

The order already standing, and the conquest underneath it

The Greeks did not land on empty scenery, and they did not land on an aboriginal one either.

Thucydides gives an ethnography of the island before the Greek foundations, and it is worth reading closely because of what he does with the claims his informants made. Of the first inhabitants — Cyclopes and Laestrygones — he declines to speak, referring the reader to the poets. Then:

> *The Sicanians appear to have been the next settlers, although they pretend to have been the first of all and aborigines; but the facts show that they were Iberians, driven by the Ligurians from the river Sicanus in Iberia.*

The etymological reasoning is worthless — Greek and Roman writers routinely took a resemblance of names for evidence of a migration — but the move is the interesting thing. A people's claim to have been always there is being reported, and refused, by a historian who has a rival account. Autochthony is the cheapest legitimating story in the ancient repertoire, because it converts possession into nature: we did not take this, we grew here. Thucydides had good reason to be alert to it; the city he was born in ran the same claim about itself.

Next come the Elymi in the west, at Eryx and Egesta, who traced themselves to Trojans escaping the fall of Ilium — a claim that imports prestige from the most famous story in the Greek world, and does so, note, by admitting arrival from elsewhere and dignifying it. And then the people the Corinthians actually met:

> *These went with a great host to Sicily, defeated the Sicanians in battle and forced them to remove to the south and west of the island, which thus came to be called Sicily instead of Sicania, and after they crossed over continued to enjoy the richest parts of the country for near three hundred years before any Greeks came to Sicily.*

There is the recursion, stated by a fifth-century Athenian without any prompting from this framework. The Sicels who lost Ortygia in 733 were themselves the beneficiaries of a conquest — arriving from Italy, defeating the people they found, pushing them west into the poorer ground, and taking the best of the country. The

island's own name is the residue of that taking. Sicania became Sicily because a war was won, and by 733 nobody was thinking about it: three centuries had passed, which is roughly ten generations, and quite long enough for a conquest to become the way the world is. Whether Thucydides' three hundred years is a real number or a conventional one, the archaeology of eastern Sicily is consistent with a substantial disruption in the later Bronze Age, when coastal settlements were abandoned and populations concentrated in defensible interior positions.

The most striking of those positions lies about a dozen miles up the Anapus from where the Greeks would land: the plateau of Pantalica, ringed by gorges, approachable along a single narrow saddle, its limestone cliffs honeycombed with something between four and five thousand rock-cut chamber tombs used, in the main, between the thirteenth and the seventh centuries. On the summit stand the remains of a large multi-roomed building of dressed blocks that nineteenth- and twentieth-century excavators called the *anaktoron*, the prince's house, and read as evidence of a Bronze Age chieftain's seat with Aegean connections. That reading is now seriously contested — later work has found roof tiles of the sixth or seventh century AD in it, and a Byzantine farmhouse is at least as likely as a Mycenaean-influenced palace. This study will say what can be said and no more: that the necropolis is unquestionably vast and long-used, that its scale implies a population and an authority capable of organising the cutting of thousands of tombs in rock, and that the single most-cited piece of evidence for what that authority looked like has had its foundations knocked out from under it.

What can be said with more confidence comes from Thucydides again, and it is precisely the fact a conqueror most needs to know. Describing the Megarian settlers who eventually founded Megara Hyblaea a few years after Syracuse, he writes that they arrived where they did because *Hyblon, a Siculian king, having given up the place and inviting them thither*. The word is *βασιλεύς*. There were Sicel kings; a Sicel king could dispose of territory; and at least one of them found it worth his while to hand ground to armed foreigners rather than fight them — presumably against a neighbour, though the source does not say.

That single sentence tells a newcomer nearly everything about the coordination he faces. There were seats in this landscape, and a stranger could deal with the men in them. But there was no apex: no Sicel high king, no tribute machine, no single office whose capture would deliver the interior. What lay inland was a patchwork of village polities with chiefs or kings, capable of alliance and capable of betrayal, and none of them able to speak for the rest. So the Greeks could buy where buying was cheap and drive out where driving was cheap, and would do both, sometimes in the same decade — and no single act of capture would ever deliver Sicily to anybody. Every power that

afterwards tried to hold the island, Syracusan, Punic or Roman, discovered the same arithmetic, and the discovery is already implicit in the ground of 733.

Two disciplines must be held here, and this project holds them both. Naming the Sicel order a former conquest does not make it fake, and it does not make its defenders dupes; a built thing that took is more real and more durable than a lie, and by the eighth century the Sicels' world was authentically theirs in exactly the way the Greeks' world was about to become authentically the Greeks'. And nothing in the recursion softens what was done in 733. That the Sicels had once done something similar to the Sicans is a fact about how orders are made, not a discount applied to the people evicted from Ortygia.

The city that sent them

Corinth in the mid-eighth century was a city just becoming rich, and becoming rich for a reason visible on any map: it sat on the isthmus, controlling the short land crossing between two seas, and it was learning to make the pottery that would within a generation be found in every western market. Politically it was in the hands of a single extended kin group.

The Bacchiadae — a couple of hundred adult males by the ancient count — had taken power from the last king around 747, abolished the kingship, and replaced it with an annually chosen *prytanis* drawn from their own number and a *polemarchos* to lead the army. They married only one another. They claimed descent from Heracles through a legendary king Bacchis, and until his time, the tradition says, they had called themselves simply Heraclids.

That claim is the sending city's robe, and it repays a moment because Archias carried it across the sea. The Dorian occupation of the Peloponnese was remembered by the Dorians not as a conquest but as the *Return of the Heraclidae* — the descendants of Heracles coming back to territories that had been their ancestor's by right and had been wrongfully withheld. It is the most economical legitimating story available anywhere in the ancient record, because it does not merely excuse a taking; it reclassifies the taking as a restitution and makes the previous holders the trespassers. Thucydides identifies the founder of Syracuse by exactly this claim and by nothing else — *Ἀρχίας τῶν Ἡρακλειδῶν*, Archias, one of the Heraclids. The man who drove the Sicels off Ortygia was, in the only description of him that survives from the classical period, a member of a lineage whose whole meaning was that a conquest had been a homecoming.

The later tradition supplies a reason for his departure, and this study will use it only for what it can bear. Plutarch, Diodorus and a scholiast on Apollonius report that Archias, a Bacchiad, conceived a passion for a boy named Actaeon, son of Melissus;

that the attempt to carry him off from his father's house ended in a struggle in which the boy was killed; that Melissus, denied redress by the Corinthians, cursed the city publicly and threw himself from a height; and that plague and drought followed, an oracle named the unavenged killing as the cause, and Archias left for Sicily rather than face it. Every source for this is centuries later than the events, the story has close analogues in Boeotian myth, and modern scholarship disputes even whether Archias was a Bacchiad at all rather than a Heraclid of some other branch. It cannot be used as fact. What it is evidence of is reputation — that the Greek tradition remembered the Bacchiads as an arrogant clan whose members could kill a citizen's son and not be tried, and remembered a colonial founder as a man who had reason to be elsewhere. Both are worth having, and neither is a date.

The structural point survives the anecdote's collapse. The men who founded Syracuse came out of a closed, endogamous, land-holding clan-oligarchy that had recently abolished its own monarchy in favour of collective rule by lineage, and they carried its habits in their heads as surely as they carried its dialect and its gods. When, four or five generations later, Syracuse is found in the hands of a hereditary landed class defined by descent from the original settlers, holding the rest of the population beneath it, nothing has been imported. The pattern has simply reproduced from the material it was made of.

What was done, what was said, and the distance between them

The founding act, then, was the seizure of a defensible islet from the people living on it, followed by the pacing-out of allotments and, in due course, by expansion onto the mainland behind. The Greek record states the seizure flatly. The ground is less tidy, and the discrepancy is worth putting on the page rather than in a note.

The literary tradition uses the same verb of Syracuse and of Leontini five years later — *ἐξελάσας*, *ἐξελάσαντες*, driving out — and it is the verb of a clean expulsion. Excavation has not confirmed a clean expulsion. At Syracuse and Leontini alike the material record has been read by specialists as showing a degree of cohabitation rather than a vacated landscape, and in the necropolis at Megara Hyblaea, the one first-generation Sicilian foundation where both the town and its cemeteries have been extensively dug, burial practices characteristic of the indigenous population appear among the Greek graves. Some of the people the sources say were driven out seem to have stayed, and to have been buried among the newcomers.

This is not a case of a source lying. It is a case of a source recording what a city believed about its own beginning three centuries after the event, and the founding legend is doing what founding legends do: making a messy process of eviction,

negotiation, absorption and intermarriage into a single decisive act with a named agent. The clean expulsion is the story. The mixed settlement is very probably the fact. Both belong in the account, and the study will need the distinction again, because Syracuse will spend five hundred years producing histories written by interested men.

As for legitimation, there was some — and its direction is the module's second finding. The very first Greek act on the island, a year before Syracuse, was the building of an altar at Naxos to Apollo Archegetes, Apollo the Founder; and Thucydides notes, in the present tense of his own day, that the deputies going from Sicily to the pan-Hellenic games still sacrificed on it before sailing. A colonial expedition sought the god's word at Delphi before departing, brought his sanction with it, and buried its founder in the city he had made, where he received a hero's cult in perpetuity. There was a robe. It was real, it was expensive, and men went out of their way to pay for it.

But note precisely what it sanctified. The oracle authorised **the going**; it did not authorise **the taking**. Delphi was asked whether to sail and where; there is no tradition anywhere of a god being asked whether the ground belonged to anyone, because in the transaction as the Greeks understood it there was no second party. And note the audience. The altar at Naxos faces east: it is the point of departure for men going to Olympia and Delphi, and what it establishes is that the Greeks in Sicily are Greeks — participants in the sanctuaries, eligible for the games, members of a world whose recognition confers standing. The legitimating expenditure of the Sicilian foundations is directed at a peer group across the sea and at the settlers' own understanding of themselves. It is not directed at the Sicels, whose belief bought the settlers nothing their ships and their walls had not already secured, and it is not directed at any authority at home, because no authority at home was going to ask.

Which is why the ground is worth this much attention. The framework holds that where a conquering power's own legitimacy rests on governing by universal law, a seizure cannot be announced as a seizure, and the resulting instruments become elaborate, scrupulous and genuinely binding — the elaboration being the measure of the constraint. Syracuse supplies the control case. Remove the constraint entirely and the elaboration goes to zero. What is left is not a subtler fiction but no fiction at all: a participle.

The share, and the name it left behind

Something was divided in 733, and the name of the men who divided it survived for three centuries as the name of a class.

They were the *γαμόροι*, the gamoroi — in its commoner Greek form *geōmoroi* — and the word means, transparently, those who have a share of the land. It is not a title

of nobility, an office, or a claim of descent. It is a description of what happened on a particular afternoon: an allotment of *klēroi*, lots, among the men who had come. What such an allotment looked like can be seen a few miles up the coast at Megara Hyblaea, whose excavated archaic town shows a regular layout with roughly comparable house plots from an early stage — the clearest surviving trace anywhere in the Greek west of a foundation dividing itself into equal shares. The same excavation supplies the qualification: grain silos of the eighth century suggest that some households were accumulating a surplus from very near the start. Equality at the moment of division is not equality thereafter, and never was.

That is the whole mechanism, and it needs no more machinery than this. A word that recorded an event became, in four or five generations, a claim of birthright. To have got a share becomes to be one of the share-holders; to be one of the share-holders becomes to be descended from those who were; and a hereditary landed class stands where a list of names once was. By the time the word surfaces in a text we can date, it names an exclusive order which the rest of Syracuse hated enough to expel.

The expansion that filled out the share came in stages and took the better part of a century and a half. Syracuse planted Heloros to the south, then Acrae in the hills about 663, seventy years after the foundation; then Casmenae some twenty years after that, a walled inland site laid out on thirty-odd parallel streets; then Camarina, on the south coast, about 598. Thucydides names them as Syracusan foundations without further comment, but their placing tells the story — inland, fortified, on the routes into the interior — and Camarina tells the sequel, since Camarina revolted against Syracuse and was destroyed by arms for it, then refounded, then emptied again by Gelon and settled a third time. Whether the taking of this hinterland was principally violent or principally negotiated is genuinely disputed; recent work on the organisation of the Syracusan *chora* argues that these foundations were enabled by dealing with local people and were not exclusively military. The honest answer is that both were used, that the mix varied by place and decade, and that by around 600 the ground was Syracusan either way.

One of those inland foundations should be marked now for later. Casmenae, the fortified place in the hills laid out in the 640s, is where the gamoroi will flee when the city rises against them, and it is from Casmenae that a man with an army will bring them home.

The class whose name we cannot fix

Beneath the share-holders were people who worked the land and did not hold it, and the honest position of this study is that we know less about them than any other structurally important group in the case.

The earliest and only contemporary attestation is a single clause in Herodotus, describing events of 485 BC:

> *μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο τὸ εὕρημα τοὺς γαμόρους καλεομένους τῶν Συρηκοσίων ἐκπεσόντας ὑπό τε τοῦ δήμου καὶ τῶν σφετέρων δούλων, καλεομένων δὲ Κιλλυρίων, ὁ Γέλων καταγαγὼν τούτους ἐκ Κασμένης πόλιος ἐς τὰς Συρηκούσας ἔσχε καὶ ταύτας.*
> *After this stroke of fortune, Gelon brought back from the city of Casmenae those Syracusans called the gamoroi, who had been thrown out by the common people and by their own slaves, the ones called Killyrioi, and so took Syracuse too.*

Herodotus calls them *douloi*, slaves, and gives no more. Everything else comes from lexicography of a much later date. A Byzantine entry, drawing on a chain that runs back through Photius to Pausanias the Atticist, records the word in the variant form *Kallikyrioi* and preserves two lost authorities who disagreed about them. Timaeus, in his sixth book, called them slaves of the exiles and described them as an enormous multitude. Aristotle, in his lost *Constitution of the Syracusans*, offered a different etymology — that they were named from having come together into the same place, *παντοδαποὶ ὄντες*, being of all sorts — and grouped them with the helots of Sparta, the penestai of Thessaly and the klarotai of Crete. The same entry preserves a proverb, *Καλλικυρίων πλείους*, "more than the Kallikyrioi," used of any large crowd, and glosses it by saying the Kallikyrioi were slaves more numerous than their masters, *kyrioi*, so that they threw them out.

Lay these side by side and the difficulties are plain, and this study will not paper over them. The name is unstable in the manuscripts — Killyrioi, Kyllyrioi, Kallikyrioi — and the two ancient etymologies pull in opposite directions. One derives it from *kyrioi*, masters, and produces a picture of a conquered dependent population outnumbering its lords: a helot analogue, and almost certainly the Sicels of the plain reduced with the land they stood on. The other derives it from coming together, and produces something quite different — an accreted, heterogeneous body of incomers, debtors, refugees and broken men from many origins, which would make Syracusan dependency a status a person could fall into rather than a nation held down. The one thing the ancients agree on is the number: a mass, larger than the class above it, large enough to become a proverb for largeness.

The defensible statement is therefore this. Archaic Syracuse ran a hereditary dependent agricultural class standing somewhere between slave and free, which classical Greeks grouped with the helots; it was substantially larger than the landholding class it worked for; and whether it was ethnically Sicel, a mixed accretion, or — most likely — both by different routes at different dates, cannot be determined from what survives. That sentence belongs in the body of the study and not in a footnote, because the alternative is to build four modules on a lexicographer's guess.

Two structural facts do not depend on resolving it. The first is that Syracuse would come to run more than one unfree system at a time — this dependent class on the land, bought chattel slaves in the households and the workshops, and, in due course, hired foreign soldiers who could be handed citizenship by decree. Few orders in this collection sort their populations quite so many ways at once, and the sorting is a good part of what the later modules are measuring. The second is a mismatch that the whole subsequent history of the city turns on: **the men who worked the land were not the men who would be paid to hold it.** In Sparta the same conquered population that grew the food was the reason the apparatus existed, and the apparatus was made of citizens. In Syracuse the food came from one population and the force would come, more and more, from another that had to be bought. That is a different machine, and the ground of 733 has already supplied both of its halves.

The west, and what nobody standing on Ortygia could see

One more element of the landscape has to be placed, and placed carefully, because the temptation is to give the settlers of 733 a foresight nobody had.

Phoenician traders had been working the Sicilian coasts for a long time before the Greeks came. Thucydides describes them holding promontories and offshore islets all round the island for trade with the Sicels, and then withdrawing as the Greeks arrived in numbers, concentrating at Motya, Soloeis and Panormus in the far west, near the Elymi, partly because they trusted that alliance and partly because those are the nearest points for the crossing to Carthage. Motya, an islet in a lagoon off the western tip, was settled as a proper town during the eighth century. It had no walls until the middle of the sixth.

That last detail is worth more than it looks. The Punic west did not fortify itself for something like two hundred years after the Greek foundations began, which is not the behaviour of a threatened frontier. Carthage itself, traditionally founded in 814 and archaeologically a little later, was in 733 a young town on the African coast, not a Sicilian power; her intervention in the island lies a century and a half in the future.

So a Corinthian standing on Ortygia in 733 could see the Sicel villages in the hills, the Chalcidian sails at Naxos a day's coasting to the north, and beaches where Phoenicians traded. He could not see Carthage, and not because he was incurious: Carthage as a Sicilian power did not exist to be seen. The struggle that will supply every emergency command, every extraordinary levy and every claim of necessity in the political history of this city — the two-hundred-year war with the Punic west — was not on the horizon at the founding. It was not a danger he underestimated. It was not in his world at all. This study will need to keep that in view whenever it reads a Syracusan decision, because the field a man can see is fixed by where he stands, and it feels from the inside like the whole of the sea.

What he could see, and would have registered immediately, was how crowded the coast already was. Naxos the year before; his own city; Leontini and Catana within five years; Megara Hyblaea within six; Gela forty-five years later, and Acragas from Gela a century after that; Zancle at the strait; Himera on the north coast, founded partly by Syracusan exiles from a civil war, whom Thucydides names as the Myletidae — which means that within a few generations Syracuse was already producing losers who left and founded cities elsewhere. Nor was the coast homogeneous: the Chalcidian foundations of the north-east were Ionian in speech and institutions, the Corinthian, Megarian, Rhodian and Cretan foundations of the south and east were Dorian, and the fault line between them will run down the middle of every Sicilian war for three hundred years, including the one in which Athens comes.

The crowding matters for a reason the collection has learned to look for. A man who cannot bear the order he lives under has somewhere to go. Sicily is large, it is full of Greek cities with the same language and comparable law, and a discontented Syracusan is a week's walking or a day's sailing from being a resident somewhere else. Whatever the rulers of this city were going to be able to do to their people, they would have to do it while the door stood open — and a ruler who cannot shut the door has to compete for people or find some other way of keeping them, which is a problem the later modules will watch several men solve in several ways, including the brutally direct expedient of moving the people rather than the door.

Reading the Syracusan ground against the framework

The framework predicts a specific bend for colonial cases: a robe cut not for the conquered but for the metropole whose belief funds and mans the conquest; formation withheld from the conquered majority; a seam split in two by distance, so that the order's core task becomes keeping the two ends from meeting; and a collapse driven by the metropole's will emptying rather than by the ruled beating the floor. The

instruction is to predict and then test. On the ground of 733, three of the four are already in trouble, and one of them fails in a way that is worth more than a confirmation.

The robe is reversed, but it points at a peer group, not a paymaster. There is legitimating expenditure here, and it is real: the consultation at Delphi, the altar to Apollo the Founder at Naxos, the hero-cult of the *oikist*. But it is not addressed to a home population whose taxes and sons are at risk, because there is no such population. It is addressed outward, to the pan-Hellenic sanctuaries and the Greek world that uses them, and inward, to the settlers themselves. The revision this suggests is small but useful, and it generalises: **a robe is cut to whatever audience can withhold something the holder needs, and where a conquest is funded by nobody, the audience is not a paymaster but a peer group, and the currency it withholds is standing rather than money.** The prediction that the robe faces away from the conquered survives intact and is confirmed. The assumption that the audience must be a metropole does not.

The split seam is absent, and its absence produces the finding this module contributes. The framework holds that a conqueror answerable to a metropole that believes in law cannot simply take: he must first change what things *are*, so that taking becomes an ordinary lawful transaction, and the instrument that performs the change is a statute — the declaration of vacancy, the grant dressed as a confirmation, the dissolution of a collective holding into saleable shares. It also holds that the elaboration of such an instrument is the measure of the constraint the conqueror is under, and that the fiction is aimed not at the governed but at the metropole's own soldiers, taxpayers and voters, whose belief is the cheap foundation the expensive apparatus rests on.

Syracuse is the control case for that proposition, and it behaves exactly as the proposition predicts if the proposition is true. Remove the metropole and you remove the audience; remove the audience and the fiction has no work to do; and what appears in its place is not a subtler or cheaper fiction but none. The founding record states the dispossession in a participle and moves on to the city. So the finding to carry forward, and to test against the rest of the corpus, is this: **the elaborateness of a settlement's legal fiction measures the constraint on the settler, not the gentleness of the settlement — and a study that reads a conquest's decency off the scrupulousness of its paperwork has the sign of the relation backwards.** The most carefully lawyered dispossessions in this collection are the ones performed by powers that had to answer to somebody. Syracuse answered to nobody, and said so in one word.

Formation withheld cannot yet be tested, and the ground hints at the opposite trajectory. The Sicels are found writing their own language in the conquerors' alphabet

within two centuries — fewer than thirty inscriptions survive, from the late sixth century to the fourth, in Greek letters — and then not writing it at all. The script crossed the line the citizenship did not, and the language did not survive the crossing. Whether that is formation withheld, formation leaking, or a boundary too porous to police is a Module 4 question, and the landscape only sets it.

Collapse by the metropole's will emptying is unavailable in principle, since there is no metropole whose will could empty. Module 10 will need a different mechanism, and on the face of the record it will be conquest.

Beneath all four sits the recursion, and here the ground is unusually generous, because it hands over four claims of priority stacked on one another within a single ethnography. The Sicans said they had always been there; a historian with a rival account says they came from Iberia. The Sicels came from Italy, beat the Sicans, took the good ground and left their name on the island. The Heraclids of Corinth held their share of the Peloponnese under a story that a conquest had been a return of the rightful owners. And the descendants of the men who came with Archias held the plain of Syracuse under the name of *those who got a share*, which is a fact about a distribution converted, over five generations, into a fact about blood. Each claim was made by the beneficiary of an earlier taking. Not one of them was false to the people who held it. There is no first innocent order here, only earlier builds that took — and the taking of Ortygia was not made lighter by the fact that the men evicted from it were themselves the grandchildren of a conquest.

What the landscape has established is the position. A defensible islet with its own water, closing a great harbour, on a coast every westward ship must pass; behind it a cereal plain that removes any dependence on imported food; behind that a hill country of village polities with kings who could be bought and villages that could be cleared, and no apex whose capture would deliver the island; a dependent labouring population of uncertain composition and undisputed size; a crowded, mixed, quarrelsome coast where exit was always available; a Punic west that would matter enormously and could not yet be seen; and — running under everything — no metropole at all, and therefore no distant conscience, no seam to manage across a sea, and no reason to dress a taking as anything but a taking.

Everything Syracuse did for the next five hundred years was done by somebody standing on that ground, with those materials, deciding what he took to be worth having against what he thought it would cost him. The modules that follow will find several such men in the same position, reaching for the same island, the same plateau, the same quarries and the same crowd, and arriving — with no knowledge of one another, and centuries apart — at strikingly similar answers.

A note on sources. The primary framework of this landscape is Thucydides 6.1–6.5, the ethnographic and foundation digression, quoted here from the Greek text and in Richard Crawley's public-domain translation of 1874; the phrases carrying weight — *Σικελοὺς ἐξελάσας πρῶτον*, *Ἀρχίας τῶν Ἡρακλειδῶν ἐκ Κορίνθου*, and the notice of Hyblon the Sicel king giving up his place to the Megarians — are given in the original. Thucydides' relative dates (Naxos first, Syracuse the year after, Leontini in the fifth year after Syracuse, Acrae seventy years after, Casmenae nearly twenty after Acrae, Camarina about a hundred and thirty-five years after) are reported as he gives them, with the conventional absolute equivalents (734, 733, 728, 663, 643, c. 598) noted as conventional; an alternative tradition transmitted through Ephorus and Philistus placed the foundation of Syracuse as early as 756, and the manuscripts vary at Camarina. His source was probably Antiochus of Syracuse, writing shortly after 424, which means the founding notice reaches us through a Syracusan writing three centuries after the event. Herodotus 7.155.2 is quoted in Greek, with a translation of my own; it is the only contemporary attestation of both *gamoroi* and *Killyrioi* and it describes events of 485, not 733. The lexicographic material on the Kallikyrioi — preserving Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F8) and Aristotle's lost *Constitution of the Syracusans* (fr. 586 Rose) — comes from the Suda κ 225, a tenth-century Byzantine compilation drawing on Photius and Pausanias the Atticist; the Greek is quoted, the rendering is mine, and the Suda On Line edition and translation were consulted. It is a very late witness to two lost authorities who disagreed with each other, and is treated here accordingly. The Archias–Actaeon story rests on Plutarch's *Amatoriae Narrationes*, Diodorus, and a scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius, all far later than the event and with mythic analogues; it is used only as evidence of what the Greek tradition believed about the Bacchiads, never as fact, and the modern dispute over whether Archias was a Bacchiad at all (Morakis, against the older consensus running back to Freeman) is noted rather than resolved. For Corinth, the Bacchiad numbers (two hundred or more adult males), the ninety-year span of annual prytaneis, and the expulsion by Cypselus in 657 come from the ancient chronographic tradition through Diodorus and Eusebius, where they are conventional figures and should be held loosely; Strabo gives a different span. Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited: Franco De Angelis on the economy, demography and settlement of archaic and classical Greek Sicily and on Megara Hyblaea and Selinous, including the eighth-century grain silos and the evidence for Greek–Sicel cohabitation at sites the literary sources describe as cleared; Robert Leighton and the excavation literature on Pantalica, where the identification and dating of the so-called *anaktoron* are now contested and are reported here as contested; the École française de Rome and Soprintendenza campaigns at Megara

Hyblaea for the archaic town plan; and the recent work on the organisation of the Syracusan *chora* which argues that the inland foundations were substantially negotiated rather than exclusively military. Population figures for archaic Syracuse are not given because no defensible ones exist. Every load-bearing fact here is to be re-verified before it is built upon in a later module, and the confidence setting throughout this study is lower than the corpus is used to: nearly everything about Syracuse reaches us through a compiler working from an interested source, and where a claim rests on a single late witness this study will say so in the body of the text rather than in the notes.

Module 1 · NOW THAT THEY WERE RELIEVED OF THE WAR

Module 1: the floor of force — who held organised violence at Syracuse, how its composition changed four times in three centuries, and why a city whose army faced outward and inward at once could not afford peace

The floor a landing party needs

The first Syracusan floor of force was the settlers themselves, and for something like two and a half centuries it did the only job it was ever asked to do.

We have no muster roll, no pay record and no list of officers from archaic Syracuse; what we have is the shape of the society and the shape of the ground, and both point the same way. The men who held the land held it in shares, and the word that named them — *gamoroi*, those who have a portion of the earth — is a description of a distribution. A man with a share of good plain has the surplus to keep a horse, and the Syracusan aristocracy of the archaic and early classical period is consistently described in the sources as a horse-breeding one: the Deinomenid tyrants who followed them would advertise themselves across the Greek world with chariot victories, which is a form of boasting available only to men whose wealth is measured in bloodstock. Below the horsemen stood whatever body of self-equipping infantry the city could raise from its own share-holders, and below them the dependent class of uncertain composition whose name has come down to us in three spellings and who were, on every ancient account, far more numerous than the men they worked for.

This arrangement is not unusual. It is the ordinary archaic Greek floor: an armed proprietary class that fights its own wars, funds its own equipment, and coincides almost exactly with the political community. It is also, for the purposes this study cares about, the cheapest possible floor and the one with the narrowest range of use. It can take ground from Sicels, garrison Acrae and Casmenae, and put down a revolt at Camarina, all of which it did. What it cannot do — and this is the defect the whole subsequent history of the city is an answer to — is be pointed at the men who compose it. A floor made of the citizens is a floor that can only be used against outsiders, because on the day it is required to face inward it discovers that it is on both sides of the line.

That day came in or shortly before 485 BC, and Herodotus records it in a single sentence which is also the earliest hard fact we have about Syracusan society: the

gamoroi were thrown out of the city by the common people and by their own dependants acting together, and they went into exile inland at Casmenae. A landholding class with horses, arms and a century and a half of possession had been evicted by a coalition of the people beneath it. Note what this tells us about the archaic floor, because the point is easy to skate past. The men who owned Syracuse owned no instrument of force separate from themselves. When enough of the rest of the city decided otherwise, there was nothing between the gamoroi and the road to Casmenae.

The day the landholders had to buy an army

What the exiles did next is the hinge of the entire case, and it is the clearest piece of position logic the corpus is likely to find in a Greek source.

They were sitting in a fortified hill town some twenty-five miles from a city they could not re-enter. They had land they could not reach, standing they could not exercise, and no force. Forty miles west, at Gela, sat a man who had exactly what they lacked. Gelon son of Deinomenes had been cavalry commander to Hippocrates of Gela, a tyrant who had spent a decade subduing the eastern half of the island with a professional army, and on Hippocrates' death in 491 or 490 Gelon had taken that army and the tyranny with it. He had a floor. He had no claim on Syracuse.

The exiles and the general each held precisely what the other needed, and the transaction that followed is recorded by Herodotus without ornament:

> *μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο τὸ εὕρημα τοὺς γαμόρους καλεομένους τῶν Συρηκοσίων ἐκπεσόντας ὑπό τε τοῦ δήμου καὶ τῶν σφετέρων δούλων, καλεομένων δὲ Κιλλυρίων, ὁ Γέλων καταγαγὼν τούτους ἐκ Κασμένης πόλιος ἐς τὰς Συρηκούσας ἔσχε καὶ ταύτας· ὁ γὰρ δῆμος ὁ τῶν Συρηκοσίων ἐπιόντι Γέλωνι παραδιδοῖ τὴν πόλιν καὶ ἑωυτόν.*
> *Gelon, bringing back from the city of Casmenae those Syracusans called the gamoroi, who had been thrown out by the common people and by their own slaves, the ones called Killyrioi, took Syracuse too; for the Syracusan people, when Gelon came against them, handed over to him the city and themselves.*

Two things in that sentence should be held apart, because they are usually run together. The first is that Syracuse fell without a battle. Herodotus does not describe a siege or an assault; he says the demos surrendered the city and itself at Gelon's approach. Whatever the coalition of 485 had been capable of against unsupported horsemen, it was not going to face a professional army, and it knew it in advance. That is the floor working as the framework says a floor works — pricing defection so high that it is not chosen, without having to be used.

The second is what the transaction did to the men who initiated it. The gamoroi got their city back and lost it in the same motion. They had solved their problem by importing an instrument they did not own and could not dismiss, and once Gelon was inside the walls with his own army the question of who ruled Syracuse had been settled in a direction none of the exiles had voted for. **A class that must hire a floor has, by the act of hiring, stopped being the class that holds one.** This is not a moral observation about ingratitude; it is arithmetic. The whole value of a purchased army is that it obeys the man who pays it, and the exiles were not the paymaster.

From this point the Syracusan position contains a permanent asymmetry that the archaic city did not have. There now exists, in Sicily, a market in organised violence — bodies of trained men available for hire by anyone with silver, drawn from Campania, from the Peloponnese, from Iberia, from the Celtic lands, and from the Sicel interior. Any Syracusan faction that finds itself losing can enter that market. Any Syracusan ruler must keep enough silver flowing to prevent a rival from doing so. That is the standing condition under which every later decision in this study is taken.

What a bought floor buys, and what it costs

Gelon used what he had bought in ways no archaic Syracusan magistrate could have contemplated, and the record of it is the best evidence in the corpus for what a purchased floor actually frees a ruler to do.

He moved populations. Herodotus lists the operations: Camarina taken and its whole people brought to Syracuse and made citizens; half the people of Gela likewise; at Megara Hyblaea, after a siege ending in capitulation, the wealthy and the notables were brought to Syracuse and made citizens while the common people, who had not even wanted the war, were sold — and the phrase Herodotus uses for their disposal is ἐπ' ἐξαγωγῇ ἐκ Σικελίης, for export out of Sicily. The same was done at the Euboean settlement. The historian then gives the reason in Gelon's own logic:

> *νομίσας δῆμον εἶναι συνοίκημα ἀχαριτώτατον*
> *considering the common people a most disagreeable thing to live with.*

Read that as the sorting operation it is. Every captured community was cut along one line, and the line was political rather than ethnic: the men with property were imported and enfranchised, the men without were shipped out as merchandise. Herodotus reports it as a preference of temperament, a nobleman's distaste. The structure underneath is colder and more legible. A ruler who holds his city with hired soldiers has no use for a large body of poor citizens — they cannot pay him, they

cannot be relied on, and in sufficient numbers they are the raw material of the next rising. What he wants inside his walls is taxable wealth and a reduced political population, and what he does with the remainder depends only on whether he can get away with it. He could, because the floor was his.

He also did the reverse operation, and it is the more consequential of the two. Gelon enrolled his foreign soldiers as Syracusan citizens: Diodorus, writing four centuries later but from Sicilian sources, gives the number as more than ten thousand. That is not a gesture. It is a permanent alteration of the city's composition, and it accomplished two things at once. It bound the mercenaries to the regime by giving them a stake in it — land, houses, standing, all of which they would lose if the tyranny fell — and it diluted the old citizen body with a bloc whose only claim to be Syracusan came from the man who had made them so.

Between these two operations the wealth arrived that made them affordable. In 480 Gelon and his father-in-law Theron of Acragas destroyed a Carthaginian army at Himera, and the indemnity extracted from Carthage is given in the tradition as two thousand talents of silver. The figure comes from Diodorus and should be held as a tradition rather than an audited number, but the order of magnitude is not in doubt: for a generation Syracuse was very rich, and the enfranchisement, the temple building, the chariot teams and the payroll all sat on top of that.

So the purchased floor delivered, on the ledger of the man holding it, an enormous return. It let him take cities without negotiating, redistribute whole populations, dispose of the poor, buy the rich, and beat Carthage. What it cost is the subject of the next twenty years.

The bought floor does not leave when the buyer does

Gelon died in 478. His brother Hieron ruled to 467, and Hieron's brother Thrasybulus lasted rather less than a year before the Syracusans threw him out in 466 or 465. On the face of it the case looks like the ordinary Greek pattern of a tyranny failing in the second or third generation. What happened next is not ordinary at all, and it is the single most instructive episode in this module.

Diodorus describes the restored democracy's first acts with the enthusiasm of a source drawing on a local tradition that remembered them fondly: an assembly, a resolution to erect a colossal statue of Zeus the Liberator, an annual Festival of Liberation with games on the anniversary, four hundred and fifty bulls sacrificed and eaten by the citizens. And then, in the same breath, the decision that mattered. The magistracies were to be reserved for the original citizens; the foreigners whom Gelon had admitted were not to share in them. Diodorus offers both of the reasons that were

current — that they were judged unworthy, or that men brought up under a tyranny and used to serving a monarch in war were suspected of intending a revolution — and then adds the flat sentence that makes the whole thing legible: *And that is what actually happened.* Of the more than ten thousand Gelon had enrolled, more than seven thousand were still in the city. They resented the exclusion, revolted as one body, and seized Achradina and Ortygia, both of which, Diodorus notes, had their own good fortifications.

Stand back from the narrative and look at the position. A democracy has just overthrown a tyranny, and finds that the tyranny's army is inside the citizen body, is armed, and holds the two strongest quarters of the town. The liberators must now fight a war against the instrument of the regime they liberated themselves from — and they must fight it *inside their own constitution*, because the enemy are citizens, enrolled by a lawful act of a previous government, whose only offence is having been made Syracusan by the wrong man.

This is the defect of the purchased floor stated in its purest form, and it is worth naming precisely because the seed for this study expected the defect to be *inheritance* — that a personal following does not descend, so a bought floor collapses when its buyer dies. The record says something sharper. **A bought floor that has been enfranchised does not dissolve when its buyer dies; it stays in the city as a permanent faction, and the successor regime inherits it as an enemy.** Gelon's solution to the problem of loyalty — make them citizens, give them something to lose — worked exactly as designed and then went on working after the designer was dead, for a regime that wanted no part of it. The men who could not be trusted to hold the tyranny up could not be got rid of either.

The war that followed ran for several years and ended in a settlement whose terms the sources give only partially: the surviving foreign soldiers were, in substance, moved out — many of them, in the tradition, to Messana — and the citizen body was reconstituted on the older basis. The democracy that emerged from it lasted some sixty years, and it is the period this study must not skip over, because it is the control case for everything else.

For most of that time Syracuse ran on a citizen floor. It fought Acragas, it fought a Sicel confederation under Ducetius, it kept its independence, and in 415 it faced the largest expeditionary force any Greek city had ever launched. The defence of Syracuse in 415–413 was conducted by elected generals commanding a citizen levy, reinforced by allied contingents and by a Spartan officer, Gylippus, whose arrival the Syracusans themselves credited with turning the siege. It ended with the destruction of the Athenian armament entire and seven thousand prisoners in the quarries. **A Syracusan**

democracy, using an unpurchased floor made of its own members, defeated the strongest power in the Greek world. That fact has to be held steadily, because it forecloses the most convenient defence of everything that comes after: whatever else can be said for the tyrannies, it cannot be said that Syracuse was incapable of defending itself without one.

The purchase repeated, and the vote that authorised it

Eight years after the Athenians were destroyed, the same city voted a man a bodyguard.

The circumstances were genuinely desperate and should not be minimised. Carthage had returned to Sicily in force after seventy years of absence; Selinus and Himera had fallen in 409, Acragas after an eight-month siege in the winter of 406, and in 405 Gela and Camarina went the same way. In the panic Dionysius, a man of middling rank who had fought at Acragas and had been a follower of the oligarch Hermocrates, accused the board of generals of taking Carthaginian bribes, got them deposed, got himself elected among their replacements, and then — threatening to lay down his command — got the assembly to make him *strategos autokrator*, general with full powers. That much is the ordinary business of a city in an emergency, and a Roman would have recognised it instantly as a dictatorship.

What followed is the mechanism, and Diodorus preserves it with unusual clarity. Dionysius marched the Syracusan levy out to Leontini, ordering the men under forty to muster there with thirty days' provisions — which is to say, he moved the assembly out of Syracuse and into a garrison town full of exiles and non-Syracusans. There he staged an attack on himself. At daybreak, with the people gathered, he made a long and plausible speech and persuaded them to vote him a guard of six hundred soldiers, *whomsoever he should select*. Diodorus adds that it was said he did this in imitation of Peisistratus at Athens, who had wounded himself, appeared before the assembly claiming a plot, received a guard and used it to found his tyranny.

Then comes the number that matters. He at once picked out citizens who were poor in property but bold in spirit, more than a thousand of them, gave them costly arms, and made them extravagant promises; he called in the mercenaries and talked them round; he replaced the officers of the Syracusan forces with his own men; and he dismissed the Spartan Dexippus back to Greece because he suspected him of being the sort of man who might restore the Syracusans' liberty if the chance arose. Then he called in the mercenaries from Gela, gathered exiles and outlaws from everywhere, and took up quarters in the naval station, having openly proclaimed himself tyrant.

The vote is worth reading as a legal instrument, because that is what it was. The assembly decided a number: six hundred. The instrument decided who they were: *whomsoever he should select*. Every subsequent fact follows from the second clause and none from the first. A guard of six hundred men chosen by the assembly would have been an assembly's guard; a guard of six hundred chosen by Dionysius was Dionysius's, and once the selection right was his the number was a formality he exceeded within days. The men he chose were the propertyless, and he armed them at his own expense, which converts a body of citizens with no stake in the existing distribution into a body of soldiers with a stake in him.

That is the whole of it. There was no coup, no assault on the walls, no massacre in the agora at this stage. A city with a functioning assembly, a recent and famous military triumph, and every reason to be wary voted the machinery of its own foreclosure into existence in two sittings, under real external pressure, by lawful procedure, on a motion that looked like a security measure. The instrument was not smuggled in. It was carried.

The island, walled against the city

Once the Carthaginian war paused, Dionysius did the thing that shows what the floor was actually for, and Diodorus states the reasoning without any softening at all: with the peace concluded, he set about strengthening his tyranny, *for he assumed that the Syracusans, now that they were relieved of the war, would have plenty of time to seek after the recovery of their liberty.*

Hold that sentence. It is a first-century BC Sicilian historian, working from fourth-century Sicilian sources, saying in as many words that peace was the tyrant's problem and war was his cover. Everything in this study about the Carthaginian threat has to be read through it.

What he built is the physical form of the position. Perceiving that Ortygia was the strongest part of the city and the easiest to hold, he cut it off from the rest of the city with an expensive wall set with close-spaced towers, and put shops and colonnades in front of it capable of holding a crowd. Inside the island he built a fortified acropolis as a refuge for a sudden emergency, and within its wall he enclosed the ship-sheds on the Lesser Harbour — accommodation for sixty triremes, behind an entrance that could be closed and through which only one ship could pass at a time. He then took the best of the Syracusan land and gave it to his friends and senior officers, divided the rest in equal portions between foreigners and citizens, and counted among the citizens the manumitted slaves whom he designated *New Citizens*. The dwellings he distributed

among the common people — except those on the island, which went to his friends and to the mercenaries.

Every element of that programme is legible from the position, and none of it required a new idea. The islet the founding party had taken in 733 because a small armed body could hold it against a large population nearby is now doing that job again, against a different large population: the descendants of the founding party. The wall is between the garrison and the city, and the shops are in front of the wall because a garrison that is also a market frontage is less obviously a garrison. The one-ship gate on the dockyard means the fleet cannot be seized in a night by anyone who does not already hold the island — which is to say, the navy is inside the citadel and not in the city's hands. The land redistribution buys a constituency of the poor and the foreign at the expense of the rich, which is the standard tyrant's move, but the housing clause is the tell: the mercenaries live where the ruler lives, behind the wall, among his friends, physically separated every night from the people they police.

The programme was tested almost immediately. In 404, with the Syracusan levy out on campaign and armed, the citizens in the army mutinied and turned on him; Dionysius survived, and thereafter the pattern is set. Later he took the fortification outward as well, walling the whole Epipolae plateau — the high ground that had let the Athenians besiege the city from above — and building the fortress of Euryalus at its western apex, a work whose ditches and galleries are the most impressive Greek military architecture surviving anywhere. That is the corrective to the founding site's one great defect, and it took three hundred and thirty years and a tyrant's revenue to afford it.

The arsenal, and the payroll beneath it

In 399, preparing to attack the Carthaginian west, Dionysius did something that has no earlier parallel: he built an armaments industry.

Diodorus describes the programme in detail, and the detail is the argument. Skilled workmen were gathered from everywhere, commandeered from the cities under his control and drawn in by high wages; they were divided into groups by trade with prominent citizens set over each; bounties were offered for output and prizes for quality, and the tyrant walked the workshops daily, talked to the men, gave presents to the keenest and had them to his table. Out of it came, on Diodorus' figures, a hundred and forty thousand shields with matching daggers and helmets, and more than fourteen thousand corselets. It also produced two things that changed Mediterranean warfare. The Book's own chapter heading records the first: *παρασκευὴ Διονυσίου πρὸς τὸν Καρχηδονιακὸν πόλεμον καὶ ὁπλοποιία, καθ' ἣν εὗρε τὸ καταπελτικὸν βέλος* — the preparation of Dionysius for the Carthaginian war and the manufacture of arms, in the

course of which the catapult missile was invented. The second was the warship larger than the trireme: the quadrireme and the quinquereme, built at Syracuse, Diodorus says, because Dionysius had heard that the trireme was first built at Corinth and meant his own city, a Corinthian foundation, to go one better.

The figures are Diodorus' and are certainly too round; a hundred and forty thousand shields is more than any force he ever fielded could carry, and the number probably records the scale of the effort rather than an inventory. The inventions are better attested, and the catapult in particular is confirmed by its immediate use: the machines appear in action at the siege of Motya in 397, two years after the workshops opened.

But the detail that repays the closest reading is a smaller one. Diodorus says that Dionysius distributed to the workmen models of each kind of armour, because he had collected his mercenaries from many nations, and wanted every soldier equipped in the manner of his own people — partly for the alarm the variety would cause, and partly because men fight best in the armour they are used to.

That is a state arsenal whose production schedule is dictated by the ethnic composition of a purchased army. It is not a national armoury turning out one pattern for one people; it is a contract shop making Iberian, Celtic, Campanian and Greek kit side by side because the floor is a coalition of foreigners and each contingent has to be kept happy in its own idiom. Read the whole industrial programme back through that clause and its logic is plain: an army you have bought must be equipped, paid and impressed, permanently and without interruption, and the scale of the industry is set by the scale of the purchase.

And underneath the industry sits the thing this study will follow all the way to the end. Six hundred spearmen, then a thousand, then the mercenaries of Gela, then contingents from four nations, then a fleet, then a fortress on Epipolae, then a hundred and forty thousand pieces of ironmongery — every item on that list is a standing charge that arrives every month whether or not anything is happening. **A floor that is bought is a floor that must be paid for again tomorrow, and a ruler who cannot make the payment has no floor at all.** Extraction at Syracuse is not a policy with a fiscal theory behind it. It is whatever it has to be to meet the wage bill, and the module that follows the surplus will find it taking whatever shape the arithmetic of the payroll demands, including forms — the plundering of sanctuaries, the manipulation of coin — that no city with a citizen levy ever needed to contemplate.

The purchase repeated twice more, and the man who solved it

The instrument, having been built twice, was built twice again, and the fourth builder is the one who breaks the pattern.

Agathocles took Syracuse in 317 with a force of his own soldiers, having twice been exiled for trying it before. He was a potter's son from Thermae who had risen through the army; his social distance from the gamoroi of two centuries earlier is the measure of how completely the purchased floor had detached political power from landholding. The assembly acclaimed him general with absolute authority, on his public oath not to make himself tyrant, and he then turned his mercenaries on the oligarchic opposition. The casualty figures vary wildly in the tradition — the Six Hundred who formed the ruling council, or four thousand, or ten thousand killed and exiled — and should be given as the range they are; what is not in doubt is that a purge on that scale was carried out by soldiers against citizens within weeks of a vote of confidence. Later, besieged and short of money for the African expedition, he took the property of orphans, borrowed from merchants, stripped temple dedications and women's jewellery, invited the wealthiest of his opponents to leave the city voluntarily and had them killed on the road, seized their estates and freed such of their slaves as were fit to serve. That last clause is the fourth time in this study that a Syracusan ruler has manufactured soldiers by manumission, and by now it should read as a standard item rather than an atrocity of a particular man.

Then, around 270, Hieron II did the thing nobody else in the case had thought of, and Polybius records it in four sentences that are worth the whole of the rest of the module.

Hieron had been raised to power by mercenaries and did not trust them. Faced with the Mamertines — themselves Campanian mercenaries who had seized Messana from the inside, which is what an unpaid floor does when it can — he brought his army out near Centuripa and offered battle at the river Cyamosorus. He held the citizen cavalry and infantry back at a distance under his own command, as though he intended to attack from another quarter; and he pushed the mercenaries forward and, in Polybius' words, *allowed them all to be cut up by the Campanians*. While they were being destroyed he withdrew to Syracuse in safety with the citizens. Having, Polybius writes, thus efficiently accomplished his purpose and *purged the army of its turbulent and seditious element*, he then enlisted a considerable number of mercenaries of his own and thereafter ruled in safety; and observing that the Mamertines had grown reckless on the strength of their victory, he armed and trained the urban levy, led it out, and beat them decisively at the Longanus. On his return he was proclaimed king with one voice.

Take the sequence apart. He inherited a bought floor. He identified it as the threat it was. He disposed of it by battle — not disbanding it, which would have released several thousand armed and unemployed professionals into Sicily, but arranging for an enemy to destroy it while his citizens watched from a distance. He then rebuilt *two* floors instead of one: a fresh mercenary corps that owed everything to him and nothing to the men he had just fed to the Mamertines, and an armed and drilled citizen militia that had just been shown, at close range and without cost to itself, what its ruler was prepared to do to soldiers who displeased him. Each body is a check on the other; neither can act alone; and the man who holds the pay chest and the muster roll stands between them.

He then reigned some fifty-four years, kept his treaties, was not remembered for purges, patronised Archimedes, and produced the one long stretch of stability in five centuries of Syracusan history. The seed for this study proposed that a bought floor cannot be inherited and named Hieron as the likely counter-example. He is one — but not because the proposition is wrong. He is a counter-example because he identified the defect and engineered against it, at the price of several thousand of his own soldiers' lives.

And even then the proposition holds at one remove. Hieron died in 215 at about ninety-three. His son Gelon had predeceased him; the throne passed to his grandson Hieronymus, a boy of about fifteen, who abandoned the Roman alliance for Carthage and was assassinated in a conspiracy after something like thirteen months. Within three years Marcellus had taken the city. Fifty-four years of the most careful institutional design in Syracusan history did not survive its designer by a year and a half.

The floor taken from outside

The end is worth stating plainly here, because it is the answer to the question this module exists to ask.

The Roman siege of 213–211 was not broken by any of the machinery. Archimedes' engines, on every ancient account, worked spectacularly — cranes, catapults, the whole apparatus of a city that had been inventing artillery for two hundred years — and Marcellus was held off for something like two years. The city fell when a section of wall on Epipolae was taken during a festival, and then, after a further stalemate, when Achradina and Ortygia were betrayed from within by officers in Syracusan service. The last defence of the last Syracusan floor was conducted, and surrendered, by hired men.

Archimedes was killed in the sack, contrary to Marcellus' orders. The city's treasures went to Rome. Sicily became a Roman province, and Hieron's own system of

agricultural taxation was kept in place by the conquerors, who found it a good machine and saw no reason to build another.

Reading the Syracusan floor against the framework

Three things fall out of this module, and the third is the contribution.

First, and confirming the framework rather than revising it: the floor is the founding fact, and at Syracuse it is founding four times over. The framework holds that force comes first and belief is laid over it afterwards to make the holding cheap. Syracuse never got far enough along that gradient for the belief to carry much load, and the tell is exactly the one the framework names. Surveillance and fortification are the signs of a belief that never took — and Syracuse is a city where the ruler's own quarters were walled off from the citizens, the fleet was locked behind a gate admitting one hull at a time, and the soldiers slept on the far side of the wall from the people they held down. The city is a physical diagram of an order that could not trust the ground it stood on. Set beside it the domestic apparatus of Athens in the same century — three hundred purchased Scythians, public slaves, *τοξότας τριακοσίους Σκύθας ἐπριάμεθα* in Andocides' phrase, whose very status as a police force modern scholars now doubt — and the difference in scale is a measurement, not an impression.

Second, the defect of a purchased floor is not that it fails to descend. It is that it does not go away. The seed for this study predicted a cycle driven by inheritance: capable founder, incapable heir, collapse. That shape is present — Gelon to Hieron to Thrasybulus, Dionysius to Dionysius II, Hieron II to Hieronymus — but it is not the mechanism, and treating it as one would miss what the sources actually show. When Gelon's floor was enfranchised it became a permanent bloc inside the citizen body which outlived him, outlived his brothers, and had to be fought by the democracy that thought it had won. When Dionysius' floor was housed on Ortygia it became a garrison that his son inherited and that survived his son's flight, holding the citadel against the liberators for two more years under a boy called Apollocrates. When Hieron's inherited floor became dangerous he could not disband it and had to arrange its destruction by an enemy. **A hired army is not a possession that lapses; it is a body of armed men with local interests, and the successor regime inherits it whether it wants it or not.** That is the revision this module makes, and it should be tested against every other case in the corpus that hires its force.

Third, and this is the finding: where the same instrument faces outward and inward, the external enemy becomes a structural requirement of internal rule. Athens ran two separate floors — a fleet for enemies, a handful of bought slaves for citizens — and could therefore afford peace. Sparta ran one floor pointed permanently

at a population inside its own territory, and needed no foreign enemy at all. Syracuse ran one floor pointed both ways at once: the army that fought Carthage was the army that held Ortygia, the mercenaries paid out of the war chest were the mercenaries housed among the tyrant's friends, and the emergency command that authorised the first was the office that legitimated the second. Under that arrangement the cessation of the external threat does not relieve the ruler; it exposes him. Diodorus says so directly and without irony, at the moment Dionysius makes peace: he set about strengthening his tyranny because he assumed that the Syracusans, relieved of the war, would have leisure to seek their liberty back. The wall across Ortygia was begun in peacetime, and that is the sentence this module is named for.

This resolves a question the seed left open — whether the master variable here is the mercenary floor or the Carthaginian rivalry — by refusing the choice. They are one mechanism. Carthage does not explain Syracusan politics because it was dangerous; plenty of Greek cities had dangerous neighbours. Carthage is load-bearing because a floor that must be *bought* requires a permanent reason to exist, a permanent revenue, and a permanent grant of extraordinary powers, and a war two days' sail away supplies all three. *Strategos autokrator* is an office created for an emergency and abolished by the ending of the emergency; a ruler holding a bought army therefore has a standing interest in the emergency not ending, and the record shows Syracusan rulers repeatedly renewing the Carthaginian war on their own initiative when it might have lapsed. The framework's usual formulation — that the robe is laid over the floor to make it cheap — needs a supplement here, because at Syracuse the thing laid over the floor was not principally a belief about the ruler. **It was a war, and a war is the cheapest robe available to a ruler whose army has to be paid, because it justifies the army, the taxation and the emergency office in a single stroke, and unlike a doctrine it does not have to be taught.**

What it cannot do is what a doctrine does. A belief driven deep across generations makes the governed hold the order up themselves; a war makes them tolerate it while the war lasts. That is why the Syracusan floor had to be rebuilt from nothing four times in three hundred years, and why the module that follows — the settlement, and who got what out of each of those rebuildings — will find the same land redistributed, and the same houses reassigned, again and again, to men who had just arrived.

A note on sources. The archaic floor is reconstructed by inference and should be read as such: no muster, pay or command records survive from Syracuse at any period. Herodotus 7.155–156 is the load-bearing primary text for 485–480 and is quoted in Greek with translations of my own; the phrases carrying weight are τῶν σφετέρων δούλων, καλεομένων δὲ Κιλλυρίων, the disposal of the Megarian and Euboean commons

ἐπ' ἐξαγωγῇ ἐκ Σικελίης, and Gelon's stated view of the demos as *συνοίκημα ἀχαριτώτατον*. Herodotus was writing perhaps forty to sixty years after these events, from Sicilian informants, in a work whose Sicilian excursus is framed as an explanation of why Gelon sent no help to Greece against Persia — that is, it is not a neutral account. Everything from 480 to 300 rests overwhelmingly on Diodorus Siculus, a first-century BC Sicilian compiling at four centuries' distance from sources including Philistus, who was Dionysius's courtier, and Timaeus, who hated the tyrants and was exiled by one; where I give Diodorus' figures — ten thousand mercenaries enfranchised by Gelon and seven thousand surviving in 466 (11.72.3), the two thousand talent indemnity, six hundred voted and more than a thousand enrolled (13.95.5–96.1), sixty ship-sheds and the one-ship gate (14.7.3), a hundred and forty thousand shields and fourteen thousand corselets (14.43.2) — they are Diodorus' figures and not independently corroborated, and the large round numbers should be read as indicating scale rather than counted stock. Diodorus' Greek is public domain; the English renderings here are close paraphrase, with C. H. Oldfather's Loeb consulted, and the short quoted phrases are marked as such. The chapter heading recording the catapult (*καθ' ἣν εὗρε τὸ καταπελτικὸν βέλος*) is quoted in Greek. Polybius 1.9.4–8 on Hieron's destruction of his own mercenaries is quoted from W. R. Paton's Loeb translation of 1922, which is out of copyright; the episode is unique to Polybius, who was writing within living memory of Hieron's reign and from a Roman-allied perspective favourable to him, which makes his reporting of so cold an act the more striking. The Athenian comparison rests on Andocides 3.5 and the near-identical passage at Aeschines 2.173, quoted in Greek; note that the reconstruction of the Scythian archers as a standing police force is now questioned by specialists and is used here only for the number and the purchase, both of which the orators state. Casualty and purge figures for Agathocles vary between six hundred, four thousand and ten thousand across Diodorus, Justin and later summaries, and are given as that range. Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited: the specialist literature on Dionysius's fortification of Epipolae and Euryalus (Karlsson and the survey work behind it), on the origins of torsion artillery (Marsden; Campbell), and on the social and economic scale of the Deinomenid and Dionysian states (De Angelis). Where a claim in this module rests on a single late witness — which is most of them — the text says so at the point of use rather than in this note.

Module 2 · THE POWER TO PURCHASE THEIR OWN HOUSES

Module 2: the settlement — who got what at Syracuse, and why the division of wealth that in every other case in this collection is the one thing that does not move was here torn up and made again at least six times in three centuries

The thing that is supposed not to move

In most of the orders this collection has examined, the settlement is the most durable of the three legs. Floors crack, robes fray, dynasties are replaced — and the division of land and office survives all of it, because a settlement, once it runs through an instrument, re-sources the holder's title. Before the instrument his claim came from below and beside him, from his own people; after it, his claim comes from a register the ruler maintains and a court the ruler runs. Same ground, different source. He will then defend the arrangement without being told to and without approving of anybody, because the arrangement is now what makes his holding his. The default requires alignment, not agreement, and that is why so many settlements outlive the men who made them by centuries.

Syracuse does not behave like this at all, and the difference is not a matter of degree. Between the arrival of Gelon in 485 and the death of Agathocles in 289 — a span of not quite two hundred years — the land and houses of Syracuse were comprehensively redistributed on at least six occasions, and in every case the beneficiaries of one distribution were the dispossessed of the next. The tyrant's mercenaries were housed in confiscated homes and then evicted; the exiles came back and took the houses of the men who had taken theirs; forty thousand strangers were seated on ground whose owners had been killed or driven out, and the survivors of those owners were offered the opportunity to buy their own houses back at auction.

This module reconstructs those six divisions, and then asks the question the pattern forces: why did the settlement at Syracuse never settle? The answer is not that Syracusans were more violent than other people. It is structural, it follows directly from what the previous module established about the floor, and it turns on an absence.

The first division, and what held it

The founding division has left almost nothing behind except its name. *Gamoroi* — those who have a share of the land — records that at some point near the beginning an allotment was made among the men who came, and the excavated town plan at Megara Hyblaea a few miles up the coast, with its regular blocks and roughly comparable house plots, shows what such an allotment looked like on the ground in a first-generation Sicilian foundation. Below the share-holders was the dependent agricultural class whose name reaches us in three spellings and whose composition the ancients themselves disputed; alongside them, in due course, bought chattel slaves.

The question this module has to ask of that arrangement is not how it was made but what held it in place, and here the record is silent in a way that is itself the evidence. There is no Syracusan land register. There is no cadastral survey, no title deed, no archive of conveyances, no boundary commission, no court in which a dispossessed Syracusan is ever recorded producing a document. Nothing of the kind is mentioned in any source, and nothing of the kind has been excavated. What a Syracusan had, when he had land, was two things: possession, and membership of the citizen body.

Both of those are revocable, and revocable by the same instruments that granted them. Possession is defeated by anyone who can put soldiers on the ground. Membership is defeated by a vote. This is not a peculiarity of Syracuse — most archaic Greek cities were the same — but it becomes decisive at Syracuse and nowhere else in this collection, for the reason the previous module established: from 485 onward this was a city in which organised violence was purchased, which meant that the men who could put soldiers on the ground changed every generation or two, and each of them arrived owing wages.

The first demonstration came before Gelon did. Sometime around 485 the gamoroi were expelled from the city by the common people and their own dependants together, and went into exile at Casmenae. They lost their land not to a court, a decree or a law but to a crowd; and they got it back not by pleading a title but by hiring an army.

Sorted by wealth: the Deinomenid settlement

What Gelon did with Syracuse between 485 and his death in 478 is the clearest surviving example anywhere in the corpus of a settlement conducted as an explicit sorting operation, and the line he sorted along is the module's first finding.

Herodotus lists the transfers. The people of Camarina, all of them, were brought to Syracuse and made citizens, and Camarina itself razed. Half the people of Gela likewise. At Megara Hyblaea, which capitulated after a siege, and at the Euboean settlement, he

cut the population in two: the wealthy and the notables — the men who had made the war — were brought to Syracuse and enfranchised, while the common people, who had not wanted the war and expected no harm, were sold, and Herodotus specifies the terms of the sale with the phrase ἐπ' ἐξαγωγῇ ἐκ Σικελίης, for export out of Sicily. He then gives the ruler's own reasoning: *νομίσας δῆμον εἶναι συνοίκημα ἀχαριτώτατον*, considering the common people a most disagreeable thing to live with.

Read the operation rather than the sentiment. Every captured community was divided along a single line, and the line was not ethnic, not religious, and not one of ancestry. It was wealth. A rich Megarian became a Syracusan citizen; a poor Megarian became a commodity with a shipping instruction attached. That is a settlement boundary drawn in money, and it is worth pausing on because the framework's colonial prediction anticipates something quite different — a boundary of caste or blood, with formation withheld from the majority precisely so that the majority cannot be admitted. Syracuse draws no such line. Over the next two centuries this city will enfranchise foreign mercenaries by the thousand, freed slaves by decree, Sicels by treaty, and forty thousand strangers by public advertisement. What it will not do, ever, is admit the poor.

The other half of Gelon's settlement runs the operation in reverse. He enrolled his foreign soldiers as citizens — more than ten thousand of them, on the figure Diodorus gives — which meant seating them on land and in houses that had belonged to somebody. Nobody records whose. His brother Hieron repeated the procedure at full scale in 476, expelling the inhabitants of Catana and Naxos, planting ten thousand new settlers on the site, renaming the city Aetna, and having himself honoured there as its founder — the *oikist* cult, the highest sanctification an act of Greek colonisation could receive, applied to a city he had emptied of Greeks. Pindar wrote an ode for it.

The Deinomenid settlement, then, has three moving parts: import the rich and enfranchise them, export the poor and sell them, and seat the army on the ground in between. It is coherent, it is legible from the position, and it lasted about fifteen years.

The great undoing of the 460s

When Thrasybulus fell in 466 or 465, the settlement went into reverse across the entire island, and Diodorus preserves the sequence in a passage that deserves to be read whole because there is nothing else like it in this collection.

At Catana, Ducetius the Sicel leader — nursing a grievance, Diodorus says, because the Catanaeans had robbed the Sicels of their land — brought an army against the city; the Syracusans sent one too; and the two of them, Greek and Sicel together, portioned out the land in allotments between themselves and made war on the settlers Hieron

had planted. Hieron's men were beaten in a series of engagements and expelled; they went off to Inessa, which they renamed Aetna, carrying their founder's cult with them; and the original Catanaeans, after a long interval, got their city back.

Then the general settlement. The peoples expelled under Hieron returned to their homelands and drove out the men who had wrongfully taken possession of other men's dwellings — at Gela, at Acragas, at Himera. At Rhegium and Zancle the sons of Anaxilas were thrown out. The Geloans who had originally founded Camarina came back and portioned that land out in allotments again. And then, Diodorus writes, practically all the cities, wanting an end to the fighting, came to a common decision: they made terms with the mercenaries among them, received back their exiles, restored the cities to the original citizens, and gave the mercenaries who were sitting in other men's cities leave to take their movable goods with them and settle, all of them together, in Messenia. In this way the civil wars in Sicily were ended, and the cities, having driven out the constitutions that foreigners had introduced, portioned out their lands in allotments among their citizens.

Three things in that account matter for the argument.

The first is the vocabulary. Diodorus's verb for what these cities did to their territory is the one that means to divide into allotments, and he uses it four times in a page. It is the same operation the founding settlers performed in the eighth century, and it is being performed again, in the fifth, on ground that has been continuously occupied for two hundred and seventy years. A society that must re-allot its land is a society in which land is not held by title.

The second is the treatment of the mercenaries, and it is the single most revealing clause in the passage. The settlement of the 460s did not confiscate the mercenaries' property; it let them take their movables and go. That is a distinction with a great deal of law inside it. A body of armed foreigners occupying other men's houses could keep what they could carry and had to surrender what they could not. **Where there is no register, real property is simply whatever the current holder of force is standing on, and personal property is whatever a man can put on a cart.** The distinction between the two is not a legal category here; it is a physical one.

The third is Ducetius. The Sicel leader takes a share of Catanaean land alongside Syracusans in 461. The people whose expulsion from Ortygia is recorded in the founding notice of 733 are, two and a half centuries later, receiving allotments from the descendants of the men who expelled them — because a Syracusan army needed an ally that season. That is what it looks like when a settlement has no source outside the balance of force: everything is negotiable, in both directions, including the founding line.

The one attempt at an instrument, and what became of it

Between the undoing and the next tyranny, Syracuse did something it had never done, and the fact that it did it is as important as the fact that it did not save anybody's land.

In 412, in the aftermath of the Athenian defeat, Diocles — the most influential of the popular leaders, and the man who had proposed the sentence that sent seven thousand Athenians into the quarries — persuaded the citizens to change the constitution so that magistrates were chosen by lot, and to elect a board of lawgivers to draft a code. The drafting was a collective task, Diodorus says, but Diocles so far excelled the rest in intelligence and reputation that the result was called the Laws of Diocles. They were taken seriously to an extraordinary degree. When he died the Syracusans gave him the honours of a hero and built him a temple at public expense. Many cities of Sicily went on using his laws, on Diodorus's account, down to the time when the Sicilian Greeks as a whole received Roman citizenship — that is, for something over three hundred and fifty years. And when later legislators codified for Syracuse — Cephalus in Timoleon's time, Polydorus under King Hieron — the Syracusans declined to call either of them a lawgiver, and called each instead an *interpreter of the lawgiver*, because the laws of Diocles were held to be the laws.

So the absence this module is tracking is not an absence of law. It is specifically an absence of *property* instruments, and the two do not travel together. Syracuse had a revered, long-lived, widely exported legal code, and it protected nobody's land, because it was not that kind of code — it was penal, procedural and constitutional. When Timoleon revised it a lifetime later he left the provisions on private contracts and inheritance exactly as he found them and amended only those concerning public affairs, and in the same year he redistributed the entire territory of the city. The private law was intact and irrelevant. It governed what a man might do with property he held; it had nothing to say about whether he held it.

That refinement matters, and it should be carried forward. This collection has argued that where an order runs by law, the law is the robe, and that law cannot legitimate unless it genuinely constrains — the powerful really held to their own rules a great deal of the time. Syracuse shows the two halves of that proposition coming apart. **A legal culture can be deep, sincere, long-lived and honoured with a temple, and still leave the settlement completely unsecured, if the code it produces regulates conduct rather than sourcing title.** A man could sue his neighbour under the Laws of Diocles with every expectation of justice, and lose everything he owned the following spring to a decree of the assembly or a night of soldiers, and neither outcome was a failure of the law.

Diodorus finishes the story of Diocles' temple in a subordinate clause, and it is the image this section closes on: it was the one, he says, that was pulled down by Dionysius later, when the walls of the city were being built. The lawgiver's shrine was quarried for fortification stone.

Except those on the island

The settlement Dionysius made after 405 is recorded in five consecutive sentences of Diodorus and it is the most complete account of a Syracusan division of spoils that survives. He picked out the best of the Syracusan territory and gave it in gifts to his friends and to his senior officers. The rest he divided in equal portions between foreigners and citizens — counting among the citizens the manumitted slaves whom he designated *New Citizens*. And the dwellings he distributed among the common people, **except those on the island, which he gave to his friends and to the mercenaries.**

Every clause is doing separate work and the whole is a machine.

The best land goes to the men who command the troops, which converts officers into landowners with something to lose and gives them a reason to want the regime to last beyond the current campaign. The bulk is divided equally between citizens and foreigners, which does two things at once: it pays the soldiers in the only currency that never runs out, and it destroys the distinction between citizen and foreigner as a category of entitlement, so that after this there is no body of men in Syracuse who hold land *as Syracusans*. Freed slaves are added to the citizen roll and given a name that marks them as the ruler's creation — the *neopolitai*, the new citizens — which manufactures a bloc whose entire standing depends on the survival of the man who manufactured it. And the housing clause seats the mercenaries and the tyrant's friends together on Ortygia, behind the wall that had just been built across the neck of the island, so that the men who policed the city slept on the far side of a fortification from the people they policed.

Set beside that the parallel operations outside the city. Naxos and Catana were destroyed, their populations sold, and their territories handed over — Naxos's to Sicels, Catana's eventually to Campanian mercenaries. Leontini's people were moved bodily into Syracuse. Tauromenium, taken in 394, was cleared of most of its Sicel settlers in favour of Dionysius's own discharged soldiers. This is the same instrument at the regional scale: land is what an army is paid with, and the supply of it is maintained by producing more vacancies.

And note what none of it is dressed as. There is no statute declaring the land of Naxos vacant, no deed of gift reciting that the recipients are already in possession, no commission dividing a collective holding into saleable shares. This collection has traced,

in case after case, the enormous legal ingenuity that goes into converting a relation between persons into a transferable thing so that a taking can be performed as an ordinary lawful transaction — and has argued that the elaboration measures the constraint on the taker, because the instrument is aimed not at the dispossessed but at the conqueror's own metropole. At Syracuse there is no metropole and there is no instrument. A man is given a house because the ruler says so, and he holds it for exactly as long as the ruler does.

Vacant land, and the power to purchase their own houses

By 344 the city had been fighting itself for a generation — Dionysius the Younger, Dion, Callippus, Hicetas, and a Carthaginian fleet in the Great Harbour — and Syracuse was, on every account, a wreck. Plutarch describes a city so depopulated that the public spaces had gone to pasture. In that condition the Syracusans did something that reaches back three hundred and eighty-nine years: they sent to Corinth.

The mother city had no jurisdiction and had never had any. It could not tax Syracuse, garrison it, or command it, and the demonstration offered in the landscape of this study stands — when Corinth's own Bacchiad regime fell in 657, Syracuse did not notice. And yet in 344 the appeal went to Corinth and Corinth answered it, and the man Corinth sent was accepted in Sicily on the strength of where he came from. That is worth recording precisely, because it refines rather than overturns the earlier finding. **A mother city with no apparatus retains a currency of legitimacy that the daughter can draw on in a crisis, and the currency is real precisely because it has never been spent on anything.** Corinth had nothing to lose in Sicily and no interest to serve there, which is exactly what made a Corinthian acceptable to every faction at once. Legitimacy is borrowed, never minted, and Syracuse in 344 borrowed the only coin available to it.

What Timoleon then did constitutes the largest single transfer of property in Syracusan history, and it is described by both surviving sources.

He began with the citadel. Rather than occupy Ortygia — which is what Dion had done, and which had destroyed Dion's standing — he had a herald announce that any Syracusan who wished to help demolish the fortifications of the tyrants should bring a pick or a mattock and come. They came, and pulled down not only the fortress but the palaces beside it and the tombs of the tyrants. When the ground was cleared he put courts of justice on the site. It is the single most eloquent act of political architecture in this study: the rock that had been the founding party's refuge in 733 and the tyrant's barracks from 405 was levelled by volunteers, and a courthouse was built where the wall had stood.

Then the land. Diodorus records the mechanism: a proclamation was made in Greece that the Syracusans would give land and houses to any who wished to come and share in their state, and many Greeks came to take up allotments. In the end, he writes, forty thousand settlers were assigned to **the vacant land of Syracuse**, and ten thousand to that of Agyrium, which was chosen for the extent and quality of its ground. Plutarch, citing the Sicilian historian Athanis, puts the total who had gathered at sixty thousand, and adds the fiscal detail that Diodorus omits:

> *Timoleon divided the land among them, and sold the houses of the city for a thousand talents, thus at once reserving for the original Syracusans the power to purchase their own houses, and devising an abundance of money for the community.*

Take those two sentences apart slowly, because between them they contain everything this module has been building toward.

First, the phrase *the vacant land of Syracuse*. The land was, in a real sense, vacant: the wars had killed or driven out a great part of the population, and neither historian is inventing the depopulation. But the vacancy had a history. It had been manufactured, over sixty years, by the tyrants — by Dionysius's confiscations and enfranchisements, by the massacres and exiles of the factional wars, by the Carthaginian campaigns those wars had invited. The liberator did not create the emptiness. He received it as a found fact and distributed it, which is what a vacancy fiction always does: it takes the consequence of an earlier taking and treats it as a state of nature. Here nobody even had to write the fiction down, because by 344 it was very nearly true.

Second, and this is the sentence the module is named for: the houses of the city were **sold**, for a thousand talents, and the original Syracusans were reserved the *power to purchase their own houses*. Read that as the property operation it is. The surviving inhabitants of a Greek city are told that their homes are now stock at auction, and that their claim upon them — three, four, ten generations of continuous family occupation — has been converted into a right of first refusal at a price. It is precisely the move this collection has traced through nineteenth-century statutes on three continents: the conversion of a relation between persons into a thing that can be sold, which is what has to happen before wealth can be redistributed by ordinary transaction. Karl Polanyi's name for the general operation is the fictitious commodity, and the point of the term is that treating land as a thing produced for sale is a world-making fiction rather than a technical reform.

And it was performed here not by a conqueror but by a liberator, in a city whose deliverance from tyranny he had come to accomplish, and the money went straight into

the war chest. Plutarch adds, without embarrassment, that the community was so short of funds that it also auctioned its public statues, passing a formal vote of condemnation against each one as though it were a man rendering his accounts.

Now the reason this matters more than any of the five redistributions before it. **Timoleon's settlement is the only one in Syracusan history that held.** It survived his retirement, survived his death around 337, and the land arrangements he made were not comprehensively undone even by Agathocles a generation later, whose confiscations were directed at individuals and factions rather than at the distribution as such. Of every Syracusan who divided the land, the one whose division lasted is the one who *priced* it — who put the houses through a sale, gave the sitting occupants a purchase right, and thereby produced, for the first and only time in this case, a set of holdings whose source was a transaction rather than a man's favour.

There is one further detail, and it is the study's best single illustration of how open the boundary of the Syracusan settlement was. Among the families who answered Timoleon's proclamation and took up Syracusan citizenship was a potter from Thermae named Carcinus, who came with his son. The son was Agathocles. Twenty-six years after arriving as an immigrant on a resettlement scheme he was tyrant of the city, and eleven years after that he called himself king.

The last two divisions

Agathocles' settlement, from 317, needs less space because its mechanism is by now familiar. Having been acclaimed general with absolute powers on a public oath not to make himself tyrant, he turned his soldiers on the propertied opposition; the tradition gives the dead and exiled variously as the Six Hundred of the ruling council, as four thousand, and as ten thousand, and the honest report is that range. Later, needing money for the African expedition, he took the property of orphans, borrowed from merchants, stripped the temple dedications and the women's jewellery, invited the wealthiest of his opponents to leave the city voluntarily, had them killed on the road, seized their estates, and freed such of their slaves as were fit to bear arms. The pattern is exact: a confiscation is simultaneously a payment, and every man made a soldier is also a man made a citizen at somebody else's expense.

Hieron II, half a century later, made the only Syracusan settlement that was not a redistribution at all, and it is the exception that closes the argument. He does not appear to have confiscated on any scale; the sources, hostile to almost every other ruler in this study, record no purges. What he did instead was to codify the terms on which the land already held would be taxed — a tithe system, administered through registered contracts between the grower and the tax-farmer, with the assessment fixed and the

procedure written down. The Romans, having taken Sicily, examined this arrangement and kept it, and it ran under his name as the *Lex Hieronica* for the better part of two centuries, long enough for Cicero to prosecute a Roman governor for breaking it.

Note what that is and what it is not. It is not a title system; it does not tell anyone that his land is his. It is a *revenue* rule — an instrument specifying what the state may take and by what procedure, which is a different thing from an instrument specifying who owns what. But it is the only Syracusan instrument of any kind that outlived its maker by more than a generation, and it did so because it had the one property none of the redistributions had: it stated a rule rather than naming a beneficiary. A rule can be inherited by a successor regime that has no reason to love its author. A list of beneficiaries cannot, because the successor's first constituency is the people the list left out.

Reading the Syracusan settlement against the framework

The first finding is the plainest and it is a genuine anomaly in the corpus: the settlement here is the least durable leg of the tripod rather than the most. Six comprehensive redistributions of the same ground in two centuries, with the beneficiaries of each becoming the dispossessed of the next. Nothing in this collection's other cases behaves this way. Northern Nigerian emirs kept their land through sixty years of British rule and past independence; the Buganda chiefs' eight square miles each are still traceable in the register; Algerian *arch* land, once dissolved into individual parcels, stayed dissolved. The settlement is normally the thing that survives.

The second finding explains the first, and it is the module's contribution: a settlement re-sources title only if there is a source, and at Syracuse there was none. The mechanism this collection relies on runs like this — the grant converts a relation into a thing, the instrument registers the thing, and thereafter the holder's claim comes from a register the ruler maintains, so that he defends the whole arrangement by defending his own field. The critical word is *arrangement*. What binds him is not gratitude to a person but dependence on a system, and systems can be inherited. Strip out the instrument and the mechanism runs only half way. A Syracusan given his neighbour's house by Dionysius held it because Dionysius said so, and there was nothing between the saying and the holding — no register, no deed, no court that would hear him. So his loyalty attached to Dionysius, and could attach nowhere else, because nothing else stood behind his claim.

Stated generally: **where title has no source outside the ruler, a settlement can buy loyalty to a person but cannot buy loyalty to an order — and a settlement that buys only persons must be made again from nothing every time a person**

falls. That is the whole engine of the Syracusan cycle, and it is a better explanation than the one about personal followings failing to descend, because it accounts for the timing. The redistribution does not follow the ruler's death as an aftershock; it follows immediately and necessarily, because the incoming regime's supporters are by definition the men the outgoing regime dispossessed, and there is no document standing between them and the ground.

The third finding sharpens the collection's treatment of law-as-robe. Syracuse had a serious legal culture — a code its own citizens honoured with a hero's temple, which other Sicilian cities used for three centuries and which later legislators dared only to interpret. And it did not protect a single acre. Timoleon left its provisions on private contracts and inheritance untouched while redistributing the whole territory, and the two facts sat together without contradiction because the code regulated dealings in property and said nothing about who held it. **A deeply rooted legal order and a completely insecure settlement are compatible, and a study that infers the second from the presence of the first will be wrong.** The guard rail against reading legal fiction as fraud still holds — the Laws of Diocles really constrained, and Syracusans really used them — but what a law constrains has to be established item by item and not inferred from its prestige.

The fourth finding concerns the boundary, and it answers a colonial prediction in the negative. The framework anticipates that a conquest settlement withholds membership from the conquered majority, because admitting them would concede the case, and that the resulting order is therefore expensive and brittle. Syracuse withheld almost nothing. It enfranchised ten thousand foreign soldiers under Gelon, freed slaves by decree under Dionysius, Sicels by allotment under the democracy, Campanians by settlement, and forty thousand advertised strangers under Timoleon; a potter's son who arrived on the last of those schemes was king within a generation. The boundary of the Syracusan settlement was not blood, creed or origin. It was money — visible at its sharpest in Gelon's sorting of captured towns, the rich imported and enfranchised, the poor sold for export. **Where a conquest has no metropole to answer to and a floor it must pay for, the settlement's boundary is drawn by wealth rather than descent, because membership is one of the things the ruler is spending.** That is why the dependent class of 485 vanishes from the record after Herodotus and never becomes a permanent helot-like caste: the tyrants kept manufacturing citizens out of whatever material was to hand, and a category that can be exited by decree does not harden.

And it is why the order stayed expensive anyway. The framework predicts brittleness from a withheld formation; Syracuse got the same brittleness from the opposite cause.

A settlement that admits everyone the ruler needs, on terms only the ruler guarantees, produces a citizen body with no common source of title and no shared stake in anything except the current occupant of Ortygia — which is a body that will hand the city over to the next man with an army exactly as readily as it handed it to the last.

The exception proves the rule, and it should be stated without flattery. Timoleon's settlement held because Timoleon did the one thing no other Syracusan ruler did: he converted possession into a priced commodity, sold it, and gave the sitting occupants a right of purchase. In doing so he performed on his own people, and in the name of their liberation, the identical operation this collection has traced through colonial statutes on three continents — with the significant difference that the proceeds went to the community rather than to a metropolitan treasury, and that what he sold, he sold cheaply enough for the original inhabitants to buy back. The achievement was real and the mechanism was the same mechanism. Both halves of that sentence have to be held at once. **The instrument that dispossesses is also the instrument that secures, and a people with no such instrument is not thereby free of dispossession; it is merely dispossessed without paperwork, and by anybody who turns up with soldiers.**

The module that follows takes up the story these divisions were told with — what was said about them, and to whom. That is a question with an unusual answer here, because a city which could not source a man's title in a document had to source it somewhere, and the place it reached for was the same one Archias reached for in 733.

A note on sources. The archaic division is inferred rather than documented; no Syracusan land register, cadastre, title deed or conveyance survives or is mentioned in any source, and that absence is used here as evidence and should be weighed as such. Herodotus 7.156 supplies the Deinomenid transfers and is quoted in Greek with translations of my own for ἐπ' ἐξαγωγῇ ἐκ Σικελίης and νομίσας δῆμον εἶναι συνοίκημα ἀχαριτώτατον; Herodotus wrote perhaps two generations after these events from Sicilian informants, within a passage framed to explain why Gelon sent no help against Persia. Diodorus Siculus supplies almost everything else and is quoted in close paraphrase with short marked phrases, C. H. Oldfather's Loeb consulted: the ten thousand enfranchised mercenaries (11.72.3); the general resettlement of the 460s, the Ducetius alliance at Catana and the removal of the mercenaries to Messenia with their movable goods (11.75–76); the Laws of Diocles, the election of the lawgivers, the hero-cult, the three centuries of Sicilian use, and the demolition of Diocles' temple for Dionysius's walls (13.34.6–35.3); the settlement of 405–403 with the best land to friends and officers, equal division between foreigners and citizens, the manumitted slaves designated New Citizens, and the houses given to the people except those on the

island (14.7.4–5); and Timoleon's proclamation in Greece, the forty thousand settled on the vacant land of Syracuse and ten thousand at Agyrium, and the revision of Diocles' code leaving private contract and inheritance untouched (16.82.5–83.2). Diodorus was a first-century BC Sicilian working at three to four centuries' distance through Timaeus, who was exiled by a tyrant, and Philistus, who served one; his own home town was Agyrium, which he mentions far more often than its importance warrants, and the reader should discount his figure for it accordingly. Plutarch, *Timoleon* 23, supplies the sale of the houses for a thousand talents and the purchase right reserved to the original Syracusans, quoted from Bernadotte Perrin's Loeb translation of 1918, which is out of copyright; Plutarch names his source for the sixty thousand as Athanis, a Syracusan contemporary of the events, which is unusually good provenance for this case, and the figure should still be set beside Diodorus's forty thousand as a range rather than reconciled. Plutarch's account of the demolition of Ortygia by volunteers with picks is coloured throughout by a biographical purpose favourable to his subject and is corroborated only in outline by Diodorus, though the courthouse on the site is in both traditions. Casualty and exile figures for Agathocles' purge range from six hundred to ten thousand across Diodorus, Justin and later summaries and are given as that range. The *Lex Hieronica* is known principally from Cicero's *Verrines*, a prosecution speech and therefore an interested source, though its account of the system's mechanics is not seriously disputed. Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited: Franco De Angelis on the economy, demography and settlement patterns of Greek Sicily; R. J. A. Talbert on Timoleon and the reconstruction of Syracuse, including the demographic implications of the Crimissus contingent; the École française de Rome excavations at Megara Hyblaea for the archaic plot layout; and Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation* for the fictitious commodity, used here as a concept and not as a claim about Sicily.

Module 3 · WITH NO FORCE OF MEN

Module 3: the robe — what Syracusan rulers spent on legitimacy, who they spent it on, and why a city that bought its standing five hundred miles away never got the discount that belief is supposed to buy

The question the settlement leaves behind

A ruler who cannot source a man's title in a document must source his own authority somewhere, and the previous module left the question standing in an unusually sharp form. At Syracuse there was no register to make a holding lawful, no court in which a claim to land could be heard, and no metropole whose statutes could be invoked. What, then, made the men on Ortygia anything other than the men on Ortygia?

The framework's general answer is that force is expensive and belief is cheap, and that every order which lasts more than a generation invests in the second in order to reduce its bill for the first — the robe laid over the floor until the governed hold the arrangement up themselves and the soldiers can be sent home. The question this module has to settle is not whether Syracuse made that investment. It made it on a scale unmatched anywhere in the Greek world: the finest coins struck in antiquity, the most expensive dedications at Olympia and Delphi, Pindar and Bacchylides and Simonides on retainer, Aeschylus produced at a Sicilian festival, and a bronze charioteer that is one of five large Greek bronzes to survive from the classical period.

The question is who it was spent on. And the answer, once assembled, explains a great deal that the first two modules left unaccounted for.

The one thing nobody had to buy

Start with the exception, because it is the only piece of Syracusan legitimacy that was neither purchased nor aimed abroad, and it is the piece that outlasted everything else.

Herodotus opens his Sicilian excursus not with Gelon but with Gelon's ancestor, and the story he tells is the framework's own mechanism narrated by a fifth-century Greek without prompting. Some men of Gela, beaten in a factional struggle, had fled to Mactorion in the hills above the city. Telines brought them back —

> *with no force of men but only with the sacred rites of these goddesses; but from whom he received them, or whether he obtained them for himself, this I am not able to say; trusting in these however, he brought the men back from exile, on the condition that his descendants should be priests of the mysteries of the goddesses.*

Every element of a robe is in those two clauses. A man with no soldiers moves a defeated faction back into a city that had expelled it, using nothing but sanctity; and he takes his fee in a hereditary office. Five generations later his descendants were still hierophants of the chthonic goddesses, and one of them ruled Sicily.

Notice also what Herodotus does in the middle of the sentence. He records that he cannot say where the sacred objects came from, or whether Telines got them up himself. That is a historian putting on the page the possibility that the founding relic of a five-generation priesthood was manufactured by its first holder — and then continuing without either retracting the story or drawing a moral from it. This project's discipline is stated better there than it is anywhere in its own papers. **That an origin was built does not make the belief a lie; it makes it a thing that was built and then became real.** The exiles really came home. No one was killed. The office really descended. Whether the *hiera* were ancestral or improvised is a question about the first afternoon, and by the time Gelon held them it had stopped being a question about anything.

Demeter and Persephone were, and remained, the presiding deities of Sicily — the island where the abduction was said to have happened, whose wheat was the goddess's gift. The Deinomenids did not invent that; they inherited a genuine civic cult and married it to their political position. And the durability of the thing shows on the one artefact that reaches us in its thousands. The head on Syracusan silver — the goddess wreathed in grain, or the nymph Arethusa ringed with dolphins — runs through the coinage of the Deinomenid tyranny, the fifth-century democracy, Dionysius, Timoleon's restored republic, Agathocles' kingship and Hieron II's, for something over four hundred years. Regimes that destroyed each other's monuments and re-divided each other's land kept striking the same goddess. **The element of the robe that outlived every Syracusan regime was the only element that no Syracusan ruler had to buy.**

That is the whole of the local, inherited, unpurchased legitimacy available in this case. Everything else was bought abroad.

The horses

The rest of the Deinomenid programme was aimed at an audience that lived five hundred sea-miles away and could neither tax Syracuse, garrison it, nor obey it.

The medium was horses. Sicilian soil grew grain and Sicilian aristocrats bred bloodstock, and the four-horse chariot at the pan-Hellenic games was the most conspicuous form of expenditure available to a Greek — a competition in which the owner, not the driver, won the crown, so that victory was a direct function of money. Gelon won the Olympic chariot race in 488, three years before he took Syracuse. Hieron won the single-horse race at Olympia in 476 and again in 472, and the chariot in 468; he won the Pythian chariot in 470. Their brother Polyzalos won at Delphi in the same period. Theron of Acragas, Gelon's father-in-law and ally, won the Olympic chariot in 476. For roughly a decade the western tyrants dominated the most visible arena in the Greek world.

They then paid to have the victories made permanent. Pindar wrote four odes for Hieron and more for the Acragantine house; Bacchylides wrote at least three; Simonides was at the Syracusan court and is said to have mediated between Hieron and Theron. Aeschylus travelled to Sicily, produced a play for the foundation of Hieron's new city, and died at Gela. Epinician poetry is a commissioned genre — the fee is not concealed, and Pindar refers to it — and what a patron bought was the circulation of his name in performance at every festival where his ode might be re-sung.

And they paid for objects. The bronze charioteer at Delphi stood on a limestone base whose inscription survives, and the base is the single most eloquent artefact in this module because it was altered.

The visible text reads, in fragments: *...Polyzalos dedicated me... make him prosper, honoured Apollo.* But the first line has been recut, and beneath the erasure the earlier text can still be made out with reasonable confidence: *...lord of Gela dedicated...*, Γέλας ἀνάσσων. The word for ruling was chiselled off a pan-Hellenic dedication and replaced with a bare personal name.

The reason is disputed and the honest report is that it is disputed — one substantial argument holds that there were two separate dedications and that Polyzalos appropriated an earlier monument, which would date the statue later than the traditional 478 or 474. But the erasure itself is not in doubt, and its direction is not in doubt either: a title of rule was removed. Whatever the occasion, somebody decided that at Delphi, in front of that audience, it was better not to be described as a lord. **A robe cut for a peer audience has to track that audience's taste, and it can be revised after the fact — which is precisely what a robe driven into the governed's**

own formation cannot be. A catechism cannot be recut. A dedication can, with a chisel, in an afternoon.

The herald, and the city that had been Catana

The most complete demonstration of what the pan-Hellenic robe was actually for is Pindar's first Pythian ode, written for Hieron's chariot victory of 470, and it repays reading as a political document rather than a poem.

The ode is addressed to *Hieron of Aetna*. Aetna was the city Hieron had made in 476 by expelling the Chalcidian inhabitants of Catana and Naxos, planting ten thousand new settlers of Dorian stock, renaming the place after the mountain, and having himself honoured there as its founder — the *oikist* cult, the highest sanctification available to an act of Greek colonisation, applied to a city he had emptied of Greeks. Pindar records the crucial procedural fact directly: the herald at the Pythian racecourse proclaimed the name of *Aetna* when he announced Hieron's victory with the chariot.

Sit with the mechanics of that. A tyrant of Syracuse, at the games, in front of the assembled Greek world, is announced not as a Syracusan but as a citizen of a city six years old which he had created by clearing another one. The announcement is the point of the whole expenditure: the herald's cry is a fact entered into the pan-Hellenic record, and thereafter Aetna is a Greek city with a Greek founder and an Olympian-crowned first citizen. Pindar then does the rest of the work — the city is glorified by its renowned founder, its name will be spoken amid festivities, it is settled in Dorian order under the laws of Hyllus' line — while the ten thousand who had lived at Catana are unmentionable and unmentioned.

That the operation was a wardrobe rather than a conversion can be shown from the same poet in the same period. Pythian 2, written within a year or two, opens by addressing the great city of Syracuse and celebrates the same man as a Syracusan crowning Ortygia with garlands. He was announced as an Aetnaean where a founder's credentials were wanted, and sung as a Syracusan where a metropolis was wanted, and both were true in the sense that mattered, which is that both were said.

The ode's other operation is larger and it has worked on historians ever since. Pindar asks Zeus that the war-cries of Carthaginians and Etruscans stay quiet at home, now that they have seen their insolence bring grief to their ships off Cumae; such was their suffering, he says, when the leader of the Syracusans overcame them, flinging their young men from swift ships into the sea and *delivering Hellas from grievous bondage*. And then, in the next breath, he sets out his own account book: from Salamis he will earn the gratitude of the Athenians, from the battles before Cithaeron the Spartans',

and beside the river Himeras he will earn his reward by paying tribute to the sons of Deinomenes.

Himera is being placed in a line with Salamis and Plataea, and the placing is done by a Theban poet in the pay of the man being praised. The tradition that Himera was fought on the same day as Salamis — which appears in Herodotus, and which no chronology can confirm — belongs to the same operation. The Deinomenids had declined to send help to Greece against Persia; Herodotus devotes a long and unflattering passage to the negotiation, in which Gelon offers a vast force on condition of the supreme command and is refused. What the money at Delphi and the poets on retainer purchased was a place in the story anyway: not participation in the Persian Wars, but membership of the same sentence. **Where a ruler cannot join the deed, he can commission the comparison.**

And the Syracusans

One object survives that shows the operation working in the other direction, and it is worth quoting exactly because it is a primary text on bronze rather than a poem in a patron's pay.

After Hieron's fleet destroyed the Etruscans off Cumae in 474, part of the captured armour was sent to Olympia and dedicated in the sanctuary of Zeus. One of the helmets is in the British Museum, and it carries, in Doric letters, this:

> *Ἱάρων ὁ Δεινομένεος καὶ τοὶ Συρακόσιοι τῷ Δὶ Τύραν' ἀπὸ Κύμας*
> *Hieron son of Deinomenes and the Syracusans, to Zeus: Etruscan spoils from Cumae.*

Read the second clause. *And the Syracusans.* The dedication is joint. A tyrant who had walled a citadel against his own citizens, deported the populations of two Greek cities, and would shortly be remembered for running the first secret police in Greek history, put the name of the city beside his own on an offering to Zeus, and the offering was made not to the Syracusans but to the Greeks in general at the place where the Greeks in general assembled.

That is the shape of the whole programme in eleven words. The ruler and the city are presented as a single actor; the presentation is made abroad; and the audience is a peer group whose recognition confers standing among Greeks. Nobody in Syracuse needed to be told that Hieron had beaten the Etruscans. The people who needed telling were at Olympia.

And the coinage did the same work in the opposite register — small, portable, and everywhere. The Syracusan tetradrachm of the fifth century carries the goddess's head on one face and a four-horse chariot with a flying Victory crowning the driver on the other: the cult and the chariot, the inherited legitimacy and the purchased one, struck together on a coin that would circulate through every market in the west. Diodorus preserves a tradition that Gelon's wife Damarete, having been given a hundred talents of gold by the Carthaginians after Himera in gratitude for her intercession, struck from it a coin called after her the Damareteion — and modern numismatists dispute both the identification of the surviving large silver pieces with that coin and the date, so the tradition is reported here and not built upon. What is not in dispute is that late fifth-century Syracusan die-cutters were the finest in the ancient world and were permitted to sign their work, so that the names of Kimon and Euainetos appear on the money of a city that kept no land register. Two centuries later Hieron II put his queen Philistis on the coinage under the title of queen, and his own head, diademed, in the manner of a Hellenistic king — which is what a robe looks like when a peer group of monarchs has replaced a peer group of city-states.

The audience that could refuse

An audience that can only be impressed is not a constraint. What makes the pan-Hellenic peer group a real audience — and therefore a real measurement — is that it could withhold, and on one well-documented occasion it did.

In 388 Dionysius I sent an embassy to Olympia under his brother Thearides. Diodorus describes the display: tents embroidered with gold pitched in the sacred precinct, a string of four-horse teams entered in the tyrant's name, and professional reciters brought to perform poems Dionysius had written himself. At first, Diodorus says, the crowd gathered because of the beauty of the pavilions and the number of the teams, and when the actors began the multitude thronged to hear them, taken with the quality of the voices, and all were filled with wonder. Then, on second thoughts, they noticed how bad the verses were, laughed Dionysius to scorn, and went so far in their rejection that some of them set about rifling the tents.

At which point Lysias, who was at Olympia, urged the assembled Greeks not to admit to the sacred festival the representatives of a most impious tyranny, and delivered the speech that survives in fragments as the *Olympiacus*. And then, Diodorus finishes, in the course of the contest chance brought it about that some of Dionysius's chariots ran off the course and others collided with each other and were wrecked.

Every stage of the transaction is visible. The tyrant offers the largest legitimating expenditure any Greek had made at Olympia in living memory. The audience inspects

it. The audience rejects it — on aesthetic grounds first, and then, once an Athenian speechwriter has supplied the political vocabulary, on the ground that his rule is impious. The tents are looted. The horses fail.

This is worth more to the study than any successful dedication, because it establishes that the thing being bought was a real commodity with a real price and a real possibility of refusal. **An audience is only an audience if it can withhold something, and what Olympia withheld from Dionysius was standing among Greeks — the one currency Syracusan money could not simply mint.** It also establishes the limits. Dionysius held Sicily for thirty-eight years with a bought army and a walled island, and the crowd at Olympia had no means whatever of touching him. What they could deny him was a place in the class of legitimate Greek rulers, and the record shows that he minded intensely: he kept writing, kept competing, and in 367, the year he died, a tragedy of his took the prize at the Lenaea in Athens, which is said to have delighted him beyond measure.

Set that beside the same audience's treatment of Hieron a lifetime earlier, and the difference is instructive rather than moral. Hieron had Himera and Cumae, an inherited priesthood, a father-in-law at Acragas, and Pindar. Dionysius had a longer reign, a larger empire and better artillery, and no Sicilian victory of the same shape, no cult, and a poor ear. The peer audience does not reward power; it rewards a performance it recognises. That is why it can be spent on and why it cannot be commanded.

Two later robes: the halo and the ledger

Two further Syracusan rulers deserve brief attention, because between them they show the extremes of what the robe could be made to do.

Timoleon's legitimacy is the most complete in the case and almost none of it was bought. Corinth sent him; Delphi endorsed the expedition; the voyage acquired portents — a sacred fire, a crown falling from a votive offering — and the whole was gathered up, three and a half centuries later, into Plutarch's *Life*, which is organised around the thesis that Timoleon was a man whose fortune did his work for him. He demolished Ortygia with volunteer labour and put law courts on the site. He declined office. When taken to court on what Plutarch calls spurious grounds he refused to be exempted, saying that this was the precise thing he had laboured for, that every Syracusan might appeal to the laws.

Two things have to be held together about this. The acts were real and are attested outside Plutarch: the citadel came down, the courts went up, the settlement was made, the man retired. And the halo is a literary construction, assembled from Timaeus and

shaped by a biographer with an argument to make about fortune and virtue, in a genre whose purpose was moral instruction. Peter Green's judgement that Timoleon was a benevolent tyrant using a tyrant's methods is severe but not eccentric: he held autocratic powers, he redistributed the entire territory, and he was the effective ruler of Syracuse whether or not he held an office. **A robe assembled after the fact by an admiring tradition is still a robe, and the fact that its wearer deserved a good deal of it does not make it less of one.**

Hieron II went the other way. He claimed descent from Gelon, and the claim is not believed — he was the illegitimate son of a Syracusan named Hierocles, and the pedigree is generally taken as a fabrication. He built on a scale: an Olympieion in the market, an altar beside the theatre a stade in length, and the *Syracusia*, a grain ship so large that no Sicilian harbour could take her, which he sent as a gift to Ptolemy in Egypt loaded with corn. Theocritus addressed him a poem. He kept Archimedes.

But his real instrument was of a different kind, and the previous module has already named it. The *Lex Hieronica* was a tax code: a fixed tithe, assessed by written contract, with the procedure specified. What it offered the Sicilian grower was not glory but predictability — the knowledge of what would be taken and by what method. Of every legitimating investment made by a Syracusan ruler in five hundred years, that is the one that outlived its maker by two centuries, and it outlived him in the hands of foreign conquerors who kept it because it worked. **A rule that tells the governed what will be taken from them is a more durable piece of legitimacy than a monument that tells foreigners what its builder achieved** — and it is the only such rule this case produced.

Reading the Syracusan robe against the framework

The landscape predicted that the robe here would face a peer audience rather than a metropole, and the prediction is confirmed with an unusual amount of physical evidence. A helmet at Olympia naming the tyrant and his city jointly; a bronze at Delphi with its dedicant's title chiselled out; four Pindaric odes and three Bacchylidean; a herald's proclamation of a six-year-old city; a poet placing Himera in the same sentence as Salamis. None of this was addressed to Syracusans, who did not need to be told, and none of it was addressed to a funding metropole, because there was none. It was addressed to the Greek world at large, and it purchased standing.

The module's contribution is what follows from that, and it is a distinction the framework has not so far had to draw. This collection's central claim about the robe is economic: belief is cheaper than force, so an order that succeeds in installing belief can dismiss the soldiers, and the gradient from an expensive order to a cheap one is

measured by how much of the holding the governed do themselves. Syracuse spent more on legitimacy than almost any comparable state and got no discount at all. Its floor stayed purchased, its citadel stayed walled, its settlement stayed provisional, and its regimes kept collapsing.

The reason is that the two things are not the same commodity. **Legitimacy bought from a peer audience buys standing among rulers; it does not buy obedience from the ruled; and the two are not convertible in either direction.** An Olympic crown told the Greek world that the man who owned the horses belonged among them. It told a Syracusan farmer nothing about why he should accept an assessment, and it told a Syracusan hoplite nothing about why he should not follow the next man with an army. The Deinomenids and Dionysius were buying, at enormous expense, the wrong currency for their actual problem — or rather, they were buying the right currency for the problem they *felt*, which was the contempt of the eastern Greeks, and not for the problem they *had*, which was that nothing in Syracuse held anybody in place except money and walls.

This sharpens the framework rather than contradicting it. The robe is still what makes an order cheap. But a robe must be *worn where the order operates*. The Syracusan investment failed the cheapness test not because it was insincere — the horses were real, the dedications were real, the ships that beat the Etruscans were real — but because it was directed at a population that was not being governed. **A legitimating expenditure aimed outside the governed body is not a robe at all in the economic sense; it is a purchase of status, and status does not reduce the cost of rule.**

Three subsidiary findings.

The first concerns the one local element. The chthonic priesthood is the only piece of Syracusan legitimacy that was inherited rather than bought, aimed at Sicilians rather than at Greeks abroad, and it is the only one that survived every change of regime — visible on the coinage of tyrants, democracies and kings alike for four centuries. Its origin, as Herodotus takes care to record, may have been an improvisation by a man who wanted a priesthood. That is the guard rail stated by a primary source: the built thing became the real thing, and the exiles Telines brought home came home.

The second concerns revision. The chiselled base at Delphi shows a robe being edited to suit its audience's changing taste. This is possible precisely because the audience is external and the medium is stone rather than formation. An order whose legitimacy lives in what its people were taught as children cannot be revised in an afternoon; that is its expense and also its strength. **The revisability of a robe is an inverse measure of how deep it has been driven.**

The third concerns the refusal, which is the module's most useful single datum. Olympia in 388 is the clearest recorded instance anywhere in this collection of a legitimating audience declining a purchase — inspecting the goods, laughing, and looting the tents. It establishes that the peer audience was a genuine constraint on Syracusan rulers, and it is worth marking that in a case with no metropole, no register, no written constitution binding the ruler, and no formation programme, **the only external check on the man holding Ortygia was a crowd at a religious festival five hundred miles away that could refuse to be impressed.** That is a thin constraint. It was, in this case, the whole of the constraint, and the module that comes next — on formation, and on what Syracuse taught anybody — will find out why there was nothing else.

A note on sources. Herodotus 7.153 on Telines and the hereditary priesthood of the chthonic goddesses is quoted from G. C. Macaulay's translation of 1890, which is out of copyright; the sceptical clause about the provenance of the *hiera* is Herodotus's own. Herodotus wrote within living memory of the Deinomenids from Sicilian informants, and his Sicilian excursus is framed to explain their refusal to help Greece against Persia, which is to say it is not neutral about them. Pindar, *Pythian* 1 (470 BC) and *Pythian* 2 are used for the herald's proclamation of Aetna, the founder's glory, and the yoking of Himera and Cumae to Salamis and Plataea; the ode is a commissioned encomium and is treated here as evidence of what was purchased rather than of what occurred, and the content is given in close paraphrase, with public-domain translations (Myers 1874, Paley 1868) consulted. The tradition that Himera and Salamis were fought on the same day appears in Herodotus and cannot be verified. The Olympia helmet inscription (British Museum, from Cumae, 474 BC) is quoted in Greek from the Museum's own published reading; the Doric forms are as inscribed. The Delphi charioteer base is quoted in the reading given in the standard epigraphic and archaeological literature, with the erased first line reported as an erasure that can be read *with fair certainty* and not as a secure text; Gianfranco Adornato's argument (*AJA* 112, 2008) that the base and the statue belong to two different dedications, with consequences for the date, is noted and not resolved here. Diodorus 14.109 supplies the Olympic embassy of 388, the gold-embroidered tents, the rhapsodes, the crowd's reaction, Lysias's intervention and the wrecked chariots; it is given in close paraphrase with C. H. Oldfather's Loeb consulted. Diodorus is a first-century BC Sicilian working through Timaeus, who was exiled by Agathocles and is consistently hostile to tyrants, and Philistus, who served Dionysius; the ridicule of Dionysius's poetry is exactly the kind of anecdote Timaeus liked, and the date has been questioned (384 has been proposed and is generally rejected). Lysias's *Olympiacus* survives only in a fragment preserved by Dionysius of

Halicarnassus and is used here for its existence and its charge rather than for extended quotation. The Damareteion tradition is Diodorus 11.26; the identification of the surviving large silver pieces with that coin, and its date, are disputed among numismatists and the tradition is reported rather than relied upon. Plutarch, *Timoleon*, is used with the caution its genre requires: it is moral biography written some three and a half centuries after the events, drawing on Timaeus, and organised around a thesis about fortune; the demolition of Ortygia and the courthouse on the site are corroborated in outline by Diodorus 16, the halo is not. Peter Green's assessment of Timoleon as a benevolent tyrant is cited as one modern position among several and not as settled. Hieron II's claimed descent from Gelon is rejected by the standard reference literature. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited: Virginia Lewis on the Telines episode and Deinomenid cultic ideology; Donald White on the political use of the Sicilian Demeter cult; the standard numismatic literature (Rutter and others) on the Syracusan coinage and the signing engravers; and R. J. A. Talbert on Timoleon.

Module 4 · HE BECAME A SUPPLIANT OF THE CITY

Module 4: formation — what was forming a Sicel child before Syracuse came, what happened to the apparatus that did it, and what filled the gap; with the Syracusan calendar and the portrait of the good subject

No one is unformed

The question this module asks is not whether a population was taught. Every child is formed by somebody. A self cannot be unformed, because to arrive at adulthood with no framework for reading the world is not neutrality but ferality, and no society produces it. What formation supplies is not opinions but the prior furniture: which language the world arrives in, which men are natural authorities, which sources are to be trusted about things one cannot check, what a grown man does, what the year is shaped like, what the gods are called and where they act. All of that is installed early, by particular adults, in a particular place, and it is installed whether or not any state has a policy about it.

That is why the framework holds what it holds about conquest. A conqueror who declines to form the conquered — because forming them as his own kind would mean admitting them, and admitting them would concede the case — has not thereby produced a blank population. He has produced a population that goes on being formed by the apparatus that was already running. The British in Kenya taught a thin administrative layer and left the rest alone, and the rest were not left unformed; they were formed by initiation, age-set, elder and lineage exactly as before, which is why sixty years later the colony faced men whose framework for reading the world had never had a British hand in it. The formation that was running holds the field.

Syracuse looks at first like a violation of that rule. It ran no schools, taught no doctrine, imposed no language of administration, and had nothing resembling a policy about the Sicels; and yet within three centuries the Sicels were gone — the language dead, the confederation dissolved, the name surviving as an antiquarian term. If the old formation holds the field where the conqueror withholds his own, why did it not hold here?

The answer is that Syracuse did not merely withhold. It broke the thing the old formation ran on, and it did so without ever intending a formation outcome at all.

Working that out is what this module is for, and it produces a distinction the collection has been folding into one.

What was forming a Sicel child

Reconstruct the apparatus first, because it has to be visible before its destruction means anything.

A Sicel child of the eighth century was being formed by four things, three of which are archaeologically legible and the fourth of which is attested in the Greek sources.

The first was the settlement. Sicel communities in the eastern interior lived on defensible hill sites, most of them long occupied — small, dense, and permanent, with a face-to-face population in which every adult was known and the same faces recurred year after year. A child in such a place learns who decides by watching who is deferred to, and the lesson is repeated daily by everyone he encounters. That is a formation machine with no staff and no curriculum, and it is the most reliable one there is.

The second was the dead. The great necropolis at Pantalica, a plateau ringed by gorges a dozen miles up the Anapus from where the Greeks would land, holds something between four and five thousand rock-cut chamber tombs, cut and used across roughly the thirteenth to the seventh centuries. Whatever the disputed structure on its summit turns out to be, the tombs are not disputed, and their meaning for formation is plain. A society that spends that much labour on chambers in rock, reused across generations, is transmitting a proposition about continuity — that the ancestors are here, that a person belongs to a line, and that the line is older than any living authority. A child raised within sight of that cliff has been told where he comes from before anyone speaks to him about it.

The third was the local sacred landscape. The Palici, twin chthonic deities associated with sulphurous pools in the plain west of Leontini, were indigenous and locally revered; their sanctuary was a place of oath-taking, which is to say a place where the truth of what a man said was guaranteed by something older and larger than the man. An oath-site is a formation institution in the strictest sense: it fixes what counts as binding.

And the fourth was the political frame, which the Greeks record without meaning to. Thucydides notes that the Megarian settlers received their ground from *Hyblon, a Siculian king*, who gave up the place and invited them. There were Sicel *basileis*, and a Sicel child therefore knew what a leader was — a man of a particular kind of descent, holding a particular territory, capable of disposing of it. He also knew there was no one above that man, because there was no Sicel apex.

Put together: language, ancestors in the rock, a sacred landscape that fixed oaths, and a known local king. That is a complete formation apparatus, it had been running for centuries, and it worked. The world it installed was authentically the Sicels' world, in exactly the way the Greek world would be authentically the Greeks'. Nothing in what follows makes it less so.

What Syracuse did to it

Syracuse never argued with any of that. It never sent a teacher into the hills, never suppressed the Sicel language, never prohibited a cult and never demanded a conversion. What it did instead, across three centuries and always for other reasons, was to take apart the physical and demographic substrate that the apparatus ran on.

Formation is transmitted by particular adults to particular children in a particular place. It has a material base — the village that stays put, the shrine that stands, the tomb that can be visited, the elder who is still alive and still deferred to. Break the place, scatter the adults, remove the children, and the chain snaps within a single generation, no matter what anyone is or is not teaching.

The catalogue is in the previous modules and it needs only to be re-read with this in mind. Gelon razed Camarina and moved its whole people to Syracuse; moved half the people of Gela; took the notables of Megara Hyblaea and the Euboean settlement into Syracuse as citizens and sold the commons ἐπ' ἐξαγωγῇ ἐκ Σικελίης, for export out of Sicily. Hieron cleared Catana and Naxos and planted ten thousand strangers on the site. Dionysius destroyed Naxos and Catana again, sold their populations, moved the people of Leontini bodily into Syracuse, and cleared most of the Sicel settlers out of Tauromenium in favour of his discharged soldiers. Every one of those operations was undertaken for reasons of security, revenue or payroll. Not one of them was a formation policy. All of them were formation events.

And the decisive one is the last. When Ducetius died in 440 and his confederation fell apart, Syracuse reduced the Sicel towns, and Palice — the federal capital he had founded at the sanctuary of the Palici — was sacked and its inhabitants sold. That is not the destruction of a garrison. It is the destruction of the oath-site, the assembly-place and the population of the one institution the Sicels had built to hold themselves together, in a single operation, with the survivors dispersed into slavery.

Consider what selling a community abroad does that killing it does not. The children who are exported are not children who fail to become Greek; they are children removed from the chain entirely, formed somewhere else by somebody else, in a household in another country, in a language they will pass to no one. The adults who would have formed them are elsewhere, separately. The place they would have been

formed in has other people living in it. **A deportation is the most complete formation intervention available to a pre-modern state, and it requires no teachers, no doctrine and no intention.**

So the framework's clause is not violated here. It has an unstated condition, and Syracuse is the case that exposes it. **The old formation holds the field where the conqueror leaves its apparatus standing.** In the modern colonial cases he almost always does, and not from mercy: indirect rule *requires* the chiefs, the elders, the customary courts and the village to keep functioning, because they are the instruments through which he governs. The Emir must remain an emir for the Resident to rule through him. Preserving the native apparatus is not a concession made to the conquered; it is a condition of a cheap conquest, and the formation that runs on inside it is the unbilled consequence. Syracuse ruled through nobody. It had no use for a Sicel king, a Sicel shrine or a Sicel village, and so it preserved none of them when they were in the way of a payroll.

That is two decisions where the corpus has been treating one: whether to form the conquered, and whether to leave standing the apparatus that forms them anyway. They can be made independently, and their combination determines the outcome. Withhold and preserve, and you get Kenya — a population formed against you, arriving as a problem two generations later. Withhold and destroy, and you get Sicily.

The altar refills

But destruction only answers half the question, because there is no unformed person, and the Sicel children of 400 were formed by something. The framework's own answer is the right one: an emptied altar refills, not because people are credulous but because the need for trusted sources is permanent and rational, and a person deprived of the ones he had will find the best available replacement.

What was available in eastern Sicily was a Greek city with a complete formation apparatus already running at full capacity — one that had not been built to convert anybody, and worked all the better for it.

Begin with the calendar, because a calendar is the most powerful formation instrument a pre-modern society has: it scores the year, and a child learns the shape of time before he learns anything he could argue with.

The Syracusan year was organised around Demeter and Kore, and the Sicilian Greeks had done something remarkable with them. In the Homeric hymn the abduction of Persephone happens at Nysa, wherever that is. In the Sicilian version — which Diodorus, himself a Sicilian, reports as the received account — it happened *here*:

Pluto took Kore near Syracuse, split the earth, and caused the spring of Cyane to gush forth. Diodorus adds the observance that followed from it: near that fountain the Syracusans hold a notable festive gathering every year, at which private individuals offer lesser victims, but when the sacrifice is on behalf of the community, bulls are plunged into the pool. Elsewhere he attributes the founding of the rite to Heracles on his circuit of the island, and has him command *the natives* to sacrifice yearly to Kore.

Take the measure of that operation. A colonial foundation relocated the central agrarian myth of the Greek world onto its own ground, made the local spring the place where the earth opened, and had the whole thing instituted by Heracles — the Dorian ancestor — with an explicit instruction to the indigenous population. Ortygia had a sanctuary of the two goddesses from the eighth century, with terracotta figurines by the hundred; the Thesmophoria at Syracuse ran for ten days where at Athens it ran three; there was a spring flower festival; and Gelon propagated the cult deliberately to Aetna, Himera and Acrae. Sicily was where the grain came from and where the goddess had lost her daughter, and every year the bulls went into the pool.

For an indigenous population whose own religion was chthonic, agricultural and tied to springs and openings in the ground, this was not an alien creed demanding renunciation. It was the same kind of thing, better funded, with a bigger festival, held at a place they could walk to. Nothing had to be preached. The syncretism was already done.

Around the calendar stood the rest of the ambient apparatus, none of it a programme and all of it formative. The market where goods were exchanged and prices were quoted. The coin with the goddess's head, circulating through every village. The alphabet, which the Sicels took up and used to write their own language in fewer than thirty surviving inscriptions across two centuries — and then stopped using, because the language stopped. The court that would hear a claim, and would hear it in Greek. The festival that was worth the walk. The employer, the commander, the buyer of grain. And behind all of it, the fact established in Module 2: a settlement boundary drawn in money rather than blood, so that a Sicel with property could be enfranchised, could receive an allotment from the Syracusan assembly, could serve and be paid, could marry in — and nothing whatever stood in the way.

Ask the formation question directly of a Sicel child in the interior around 380. Who are his natural leaders? The men who decide anything that affects his village are Greek. Who is a trusted source about the world beyond what he can see? A Greek — a trader, a magistrate, a priest at a festival his own grandmother attended. What language does the world arrive in? Greek, because that is the language of the market, the court, the coin and the god. **This is a formation apparatus with no ministry, no curriculum**

and no intention, and it was more thorough than any of the deliberate programmes in this collection — because a child does not distinguish between what he is taught and what is simply the case, and to him it was simply the case.

The suppliant

The proof that the installation had already gone all the way down is the career of the one man who organised Sicel resistance, and it is why this module carries his name. What he reached for when he needed instruments shows what had been put in him.

Ducetius appears in Diodorus in 466, immediately after the fall of the tyranny, and is styled a Sicel of distinguished descent and, at 11.78, βασιλεύς, king of the Sicels. Over about fifteen years he did what no Sicel had done and brought the interior communities into a single confederation. Every method he used was Greek.

He built cities. He moved his own community of Menae down from its hill into the plain and founded Menaenum there — a synoecism, the characteristic Greek operation of gathering scattered settlement into one urban centre. He founded Palice below it and gave it a large territory. He sited it at the sanctuary of the Palici, which was indigenous — and siting a new federal capital at an ancestral shrine is precisely what the Deinomenids did with Demeter and Kore and what Hieron did at Aetna. He took the fortress of Motyum and the city of Aetna itself, and raided Acragantine ground, which brought both major Greek powers against him.

He lost at Nomae in 450, his coalition began to disintegrate, and then, in Diodorus's account:

> *Finally, when Ducetius saw that his remaining friends were about to lay hands upon him, he anticipated them by slipping away at night and riding off to Syracuse. And while it was still night he entered the market-place of the Syracusans, and seating himself at the altars he became a suppliant of the city, placing both his person and the land which he controlled at the disposition of the Syracusans.*

Suppliancy at an altar was a Greek institution with a precise content: the suppliant passes under the god's protection, and the community that removes or kills him incurs pollution. It converts an unwinnable military position into a political question — and it works only if both parties hold the same thing sacred. A defeated Sicel king rode by night into his enemy's capital and staked his life on it, which means he was confident the assembly would feel bound. He was right. Diodorus records the debate: the practised popular speakers urged punishment and revenge; the most respectable of the older citizens argued that the question was not what Ducetius deserved but what was

fitting for Syracusans, and that killing a man whom fortune had thrown down was improper while reverence for the gods was not. They voted to spare him, sent him to Corinth, and paid his maintenance.

Then he came back — claiming an oracle had told him to found a colony at Kale Akte, the Fair Promontory, a Greek name coined by Greek traders generations earlier; bringing settlers, some of them Corinthian; joined by Archonides, the Sicel ruler of Herbita; almost certainly with Syracusan connivance, since he could not otherwise have left Corinth. The last Sicel national leader ended as the *oikist* of a Greek-named town founded on the authority of a Greek oracle.

None of that is collaboration and none of it is a leak. It is a display of what had been installed. Ducetius knew what a leader is — a man who founds a city. He knew what makes a foundation legitimate — a god's word. He knew where authority is properly seated — at a sanctuary. He knew what a defeated man does — he goes to an altar. The whole framework through which he read his own situation, including his resistance to Syracuse, had been supplied by the Greek world, and there is no sign he experienced any of it as borrowed, because to him it was simply what these things were.

And this is exactly why Palice mattered and exactly why its destruction was decisive. Ducetius was not only fighting a war; he was building an apparatus. A federal capital at an ancestral oath-site, with a territory and a population, is the thing that would have formed the next generation of Sicels as Sicels — given them a place, a centre, a calendar of their own, and an answer to the question of who their leaders were. He had the right instinct. He built the machine. Syracuse sacked it and sold the people who would have run it, and after that there was nothing to form a Sicel child into a Sicel.

The Syracusan year, and the good subject

The Field Manual asks for two reconstructions, and both are recoverable in outline.

The calendar. The Syracusan year was scored by the two goddesses. The annual gathering at Cyane with bulls driven into the pool; a ten-day Thesmophoria, women's rites with the moulded cakes the whole island called *mylloi*; a spring festival of flowers marking Kore's return; and the sanctuary on Ortygia from the city's first century, later moved up to the acropolis. Layered over these were the civic and dynastic additions: the founder's cult of the *oikist*, renewed annually; the sacrifice on the altar of Apollo Archegetes at Naxos that any Sicilian Greek made before sailing to the pan-Hellenic games; and, from 466, the Festival of Liberation with its games on the anniversary of the tyranny's fall, at which Diodorus says four hundred and fifty bulls were sacrificed and eaten by the citizens.

That last one is worth pausing on, because the Field Manual also asks for a legitimacy-determination event — an occasion where the population had to *do* something — and Syracuse supplies a devastating pair. In 466 the Syracusans threw out a tyrant, voted a colossal statue to Zeus the Liberator, and instituted an annual festival to rehearse the lesson every year thereafter. In 405 the same city, with that festival presumably still in the calendar, voted Dionysius a bodyguard of six hundred men of his own selection. **An annual ritual of liberty ran for sixty-one years and did not survive one bad winter.** A calendar can install a memory; it cannot by itself install a disposition strong enough to price a vote.

The portrait of the good subject. Here the reconstruction produces an absence, and the absence is the finding. Syracuse generated an enormous body of celebratory literature and every surviving piece of it portrays the good *ruler*: Pindar's Hieron, just, victorious, generous, founder of cities, crowned; Bacchylides' Hieron; Xenophon's dialogue on the tyrant's unhappiness. There is no Syracusan conduct manual, no catechism, no *Works and Days*, no equivalent of the Spartan portrait of the man who returns with his shield. The city produced no image of what an ordinary Syracusan ought to be.

The nearest thing is political and it comes from a general rather than a poet. At the congress of Gela in 424 Hermocrates argued to the assembled Sicilian cities that they should compose their quarrels because the Athenians were coming, and grounded the appeal not on any city's interest but on the proposition that the Sicilian Greeks were dwellers in one country and neighbours in one sea, whose divisions were an invitation. Thucydides reports the speech and reports that it worked. That is a portrait of the good subject as a *Sicilian* Greek — a man who recognises that the relevant unit is the island — and it is the only large-scale civic self-image the case produces.

What formed a Syracusan child, then, was the family, the cult, and the visible arrangements of the city; and what the visible arrangements taught is not flattering but is entirely consistent with the previous three modules. A child in fourth-century Syracuse learned by observation that the man on Ortygia decides; that a holding is provisional and lasts as long as its guarantor; that soldiers are bought and can therefore be outbid; and that when the question is who owns something, the answer is settled by whoever argues best in front of a crowd. **The formation that actually ran at Syracuse was the structure itself, teaching by demonstration** — which is why the same men kept reaching for the same solutions across three centuries without any of them having read about the last one.

The curriculum that came out of the courts

Which brings the argument back to the one thing Syracuse codified, and it is now legible as formation rather than as a curiosity.

When the tyranny fell in 466 and the exiles came home, the courts filled with men reclaiming estates that others had been farming for twenty years. Neither side could produce a deed, because deeds did not exist. Cicero, transmitting Aristotle's lost history of the subject, puts the situation in a subordinate clause:

> *cum sublatis in Sicilia tyrannis res privatae longo intervallo iudiciis repeterentur*
> *when, the tyrants having been removed in Sicily, private property was after a long interval being reclaimed through the courts.*

Out of that came Corax and Tisias and the systematic art of persuasion: a structure for a speech, and — the substantive part — a method of arguing from εἰκός, the likely, from what a listener will find plausible about how people generally behave. It was transmissible, teachable for a fee, and usable by a man with no other advantage. Gorgias of Leontini carried it to Athens on an embassy in 427; within a century it was the core of Greek higher education, and for the next thousand years every educated man in the Mediterranean was formed by a discipline devised in Syracuse to argue about land in the absence of paperwork.

The tradition needs two cautions kept in the body of the text. Aristotle's *Synagoge technon* is lost, Corax wrote nothing, Cicero writes four centuries later, and a serious modern argument holds that Corax and Tisias were one man and the foundation story a schematic myth of the kind rhetorical handbooks liked to supply for themselves. What survives the scepticism is the association, uncontested in antiquity, between the birth of the technique and post-tyrannical Sicily, and Aristotle's specific link to property litigation. Even as legend it records what Greeks believed rhetoric was *for*.

And read as formation, the point is sharper than the invention itself. Corax and Tisias did not teach Syracusans anything new about their world. They *codified what a Syracusan child already knew from watching* — that proof is unavailable, that possession is contested, and that the question is decided by whoever makes the better case in front of a crowd. The society's tacit formation became an explicit curriculum, and then a portable one. **A curriculum that succeeds is usually one that writes down what the structure was already teaching.**

The one attempt, and why it could not work

There is exactly one deliberate formation project in Syracusan history and it was aimed at a single adult.

Plato came to Sicily three times. On the first visit around 388 he made a convert of Dion, brother-in-law of Dionysius I. When the elder Dionysius died in 367, Dion summoned him back to educate the heir, on the proposition that a tyrant taught philosophy would become a philosopher-king. Dionysius the Younger took up geometry as a court fashion, quarrelled with Dion, exiled him, and eventually kept Plato under something close to house arrest on the third visit in 361. Dion returned with mercenaries in 357, took Syracuse, ruled badly, and was assassinated in 354 by Callippus, an Athenian from the same philosophical circle. Within a decade the city had to be repopulated from Greece.

The *Seventh Letter*, whose authenticity has been disputed for two centuries and remains open, defends the failure by saying the material was wrong — that Dionysius was not serious, that the court was full of flatterers, that the philosophical life cannot be taken up as an accomplishment.

Read against the doctrine of this module, the excuse is beside the point and the failure was structural. **Formation is of children; what can be done to an adult is education, and education is a coat rather than a skeleton.** A man of thirty already has his framework; he can acquire opinions, techniques, even convictions, but the prior furniture — who his natural authorities are, what counts as obvious, what he cannot see because he was never given a way to look at it — was installed before anyone asked him. Plato knew this better than anyone, which is why the *Republic* starts its guardians in infancy and takes the children out of the city. Sent to Syracuse, he was offered one adult and thirty years too late.

Reading Syracusan formation against the framework

The framework's clause is correct and this module's contribution is to name its unstated condition. The formation that was running holds the field when the conqueror withholds his own — provided the apparatus that runs it is left standing. Formation is not a doctrine floating over a people; it is transmitted by named adults to named children in particular villages, at particular shrines, in sight of particular tombs, and it has a material and demographic base that can be destroyed by measures taken for reasons that have nothing to do with belief. Syracuse never argued with Sicel formation. It razed Camarina, moved half of Gela, sold the commons of two cities for export, cleared Catana and Naxos twice, emptied Leontini into Syracuse, and sacked

the Sicel federal sanctuary at Palice and sold its people. None of that was a formation policy. All of it was a formation outcome.

So there are two decisions and not one, and they can be made independently: whether to form the conquered, and whether to leave standing the apparatus that will form them anyway. European colonial powers overwhelmingly withheld *and preserved*, because indirect rule requires the chief, the elder and the customary court to keep functioning — the native apparatus is the instrument of a cheap conquest, and the formation running inside it is the unbilled consequence, arriving as a problem two generations later. Syracuse ruled through nobody and preserved nothing. **Withhold and preserve gives you Kenya; withhold and destroy gives you Sicily; and the second is not the gentler of the two.**

The refilling altar is the mechanism, and it operated here without a hand on it. A population deprived of its trusted sources does not become a population without trusted sources; it finds the best on offer, which is the intelligent response to a permanent need and not evidence of anybody's credulity. What was on offer in Sicily was a Greek city already running a full apparatus at full strength for its own purposes: a calendar built on the two goddesses, with the abduction of Kore localised at Syracuse itself and the bulls going into the pool at Cyane every year; a ten-day Thesmophoria; sanctuaries from the eighth century; a market, a coin, a court, an alphabet; and a settlement boundary drawn in money rather than blood, so that nothing stood in the way of entry. **The most complete formation in this collection was performed by a state that had no formation policy, through the ordinary furniture of a Greek city, on a population whose own apparatus had been dismantled for unrelated reasons.** That is a real addition to the account: formation does not require a ministry, a mission or a curriculum. It requires only that a functioning apparatus be the only one standing.

Ducetius is the evidence, and he should be read as a display rather than a defection. When the ablest Sicel of the century needed to make his people cohere, every instrument that was real to him was Greek — synoecism, a founded city, a sanctuary capital, an oracle, an *oikist*, an altar. His framework for reading his own resistance had been supplied by the people he was resisting, and he plainly did not experience it as borrowed. The corollary is the one worth carrying forward: **a conquered people whose leaders can only conceive of resistance in the conqueror's categories has already lost the formation contest, and may lose it before anyone notices, because the resistance itself looks like evidence to the contrary.** And Palice shows he understood the stakes better than his enemies did: he was building the apparatus that

would have formed the next generation, which is precisely the thing Syracuse destroyed.

A subsidiary finding, on curricula. The one formation technology Syracuse codified — the art of arguing from probability — was produced by the absence Module 2 identified, and it succeeded because it wrote down what the structure was already teaching. Where there is no register, plausibility is the only proof, and a society in that condition will raise the art of the plausible to a very high level whether or not anyone means to. Rhetoric is what a missing land register looks like when it becomes a curriculum, and it travelled further than anything Syracuse ever bought.

And a final caution the module has to state against itself. Nothing here should be read as saying the Sicels were dupes or that their world was thin. It was a real world, running for centuries on ancestors, oaths and kings, and it formed people who were nobody's fools — Ducetius held off the two strongest cities in Sicily for a decade. What happened to them was not persuasion and was not seduction. It was the physical removal of the adults and the places that would have transmitted the world to the children, followed by the ordinary, unforced, entirely rational movement of those children toward the only trusted sources left standing. That the outcome looks in retrospect like assimilation should not obscure what it was in the doing, which was mostly deportation.

The module that follows takes up the cost column — why, for the ordinary subject, the ledger came out against revolt in a city that had bought no discount from belief. The two dials will be the credibility of force and the availability of exit, and Sicily's answer on the second dial is unlike anything else in this collection: the door stood open in every direction, all the time.

A note on sources. The Sicel formation apparatus is reconstructed from archaeology and from incidental notices in Greek writers; no Sicel source of any kind survives, and the reconstruction should be weighed accordingly. Pantalica's necropolis of roughly four to five thousand rock-cut chamber tombs is securely attested and conventionally dated to the thirteenth–seventh centuries; the identification and dating of the summit building as a Bronze Age *anaktoron* is now seriously contested, with later work finding roof tiles of the sixth or seventh century AD, and no weight is placed on it here. The Palici sanctuary and its function as an oath-site are known from Diodorus (11.89) and later notices. Thucydides 6.4.2 supplies Hyblon the Sicel king. The Sicel epigraphic corpus — fewer than thirty inscriptions, all in the Greek alphabet, roughly late sixth to fourth century — is reported from the standard specialist literature on the pre-Greek languages of Sicily. Ducetius is known from Diodorus alone (11.76, 78, 88–92; 12.8, 29), with a passing mention at Thucydides 6.4; the quoted passage is 11.92.1, given in

close paraphrase with C. H. Oldfather's Loeb consulted, and the assembly debate at 11.92.2–4 is reported in Diodorus's habitual idiom, in which reckless popular speakers are opposed by the most respectable of the elders — that framing is his moralising manner rather than a transcript, and only the vote and its outcome are load-bearing. The view that his return from Corinth had Syracusan connivance is the majority modern position and is stated as such. The Sicilian localisation of the Rape of Kore, the annual gathering at Cyane and the bulls plunged in the pool are Diodorus 5.4.2 and 4.23.4; Diodorus was a Sicilian writing in the first century BC and is here a witness to the developed form of a tradition whose antiquity cannot be independently fixed, though the eighth-century sanctuary material from Ortygia shows the cult itself is as old as the city. The ten-day Syracusan Thesmophoria and the *mylloi* come through Athenaeus. The Festival of Liberation, the colossal Zeus Eleutherios and the four hundred and fifty bulls are Diodorus 11.72. Hermocrates at the congress of Gela is Thucydides 4.59–64, a speech composed by Thucydides according to his stated method and used here for its argument rather than its wording. Cicero, *Brutus* 46, is quoted in Latin and transmits Aristotle's lost *Synagoge technon*; Thomas Cole and others have argued that Corax and Tisias were one person and the story schematic, which is noted and not resolved. Plato's Sicilian visits rest on the *Seventh Letter*, whose authenticity is disputed and which is used here for the shape of its argument only, together with Plutarch's *Dion* — moral biography at four and a half centuries' distance, drawing on Timaeus — and Diodorus 16; the tale of Plato's sale into slavery is late and doubtful. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited: Robert Leighton on Sicilian prehistory and Pantalica; Franco De Angelis on Greek–indigenous interaction, demography and settlement, including the evidence for cohabitation at sites the literary sources describe as cleared; Donald White on the political deployment of the Sicilian Demeter cult; the Morgantina excavation literature for the interior settlement sequence; and the recent work at Caronia on Kale Akte. No population figures are given for the Sicel interior because none are defensible.

Module 5 · TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM KNOWING ONE ANOTHER

Module 5: the cost column — why the ordinary man complied, what he got for it, what it cost him not to, and why in a city where the door always stood open the instrument rulers reached for was the destruction of trust between neighbours

The ledger, and who is keeping it

Every order rests, in the end, on a calculation made by people who are not in charge of anything. A man weighs what he gets from the arrangement against what he gives up, and weighs both against what would happen to him if he refused, and against whether refusing would do any good, and against whether he could simply go somewhere else. Where he believes deeply that the arrangement is right, most of that calculation never happens, because a thing held as reality is not weighed. Where he does not, the sums are done, and the ruler's problem is to make them come out his way.

There are only so many ways to make them come out. Fill the benefit column, so that compliance pays. Fill the cost column, so that refusal is punished by an enforcer who can reach him and whom he knows can reach him. Install the belief, so that the question is never posed. Or close the door, so that the alternative to this arrangement is no arrangement at all.

The previous modules have established that at Syracuse the third of these was largely unavailable. There was no formation programme, no doctrine of the ruler's right, no portrait of the good subject, and a legitimating expenditure aimed at foreigners five hundred miles away. That leaves cost, benefit, and the door — and the door is where this case departs most sharply from anything else in the collection.

Two further things have to be said before the sums are done. The first is that there is no single Syracusan ledger, because there was no single Syracusan position: a citizen with a farm, a landless man in the city, an enfranchised mercenary, a chattel slave in a quarry, a farmer in a subject Greek town, and a Sicel in the hills were sitting at very different desks, and a ruler who could make the numbers work for three of those did not have to make them work for the other three. The second is that the sums are never done in isolation. A man's estimate of what refusal costs depends almost entirely on whether other men will refuse with him, and that depends on whether he knows and

trusts them. That last item is not a footnote to the ledger. It turns out, on the evidence of this case, to be the item rulers attacked first.

The dial nobody could close

Sicily in the classical period was the most crowded Greek landscape outside the Aegean, and every part of that crowding was an exit.

By 450 the island held Greek cities at Naxos, Catana, Leontini, Megara, Camarina, Gela, Acragas, Selinus, Himera, Zancle-Messana, Tauromenium and Syracuse, most of them within two or three days' walk of each other along the coast, speaking mutually intelligible dialects, worshipping the same gods, and running comparable law. Behind them lay the Sicel interior; to the west lay Punic Motya, Panormus and Soluntum, which took Greek residents and traded with Greeks; across the strait lay the Greek cities of Italy — Rhegium, Locri, Croton, Taras — a day's sail; and beyond them the whole of the Greek world, which had spent three centuries absorbing surplus people and had a standing appetite for soldiers, craftsmen and farmers.

This was not a theoretical exit. The record is a catalogue of people using it. Himera was founded in part by Syracusan exiles from a civil war, whom Thucydides names as the Myletidae — which means Syracuse was exporting political losers within a few generations of its own foundation. The gamoroi expelled around 485 went to Casmenae and sat there until they could hire an army. The enfranchised mercenaries who lost the war of the 460s were removed, by treaty, to Messana with their movable goods. Dion recruited his invasion force from Syracusan exiles in the Peloponnese. Timoleon found the city so emptied that its public spaces had gone to pasture. In this study, exile is not an exceptional punishment; it is the ordinary condition of a large fraction of the political class at any given moment, and men went in and out of it as the balance of force shifted.

No Syracusan ruler, at any point in five centuries, is recorded passing a law against flight. There are no internal passports here, no permit to leave, no registration of movement, no penalty for absence. The reason is not liberality. It is that such a law would have been unenforceable on an island of that size with that many harbours, and every ruler knew it.

Which means the second dial — the one that in most cases in this collection can be turned down until the extraction reaches the bone — was jammed open at Syracuse, permanently, and could not be closed by any instrument available. That single fact sets an upper limit on everything a Syracusan ruler could take from a man with legs and a trade, and it is the reason this case never produces a plantation, a mine, or the kind of floor-scraping extraction that appears where every door is shut.

Closing the destinations

Confronted with a door that cannot be shut, a ruler has one remaining option, and Syracuse took it repeatedly across three centuries: eliminate the places worth going to.

Read the imperial record with that in view and it changes shape. Gelon razed Camarina and moved its people into Syracuse; destroyed Megara Hyblaea and the Euboean settlement, importing the rich and selling the poor; moved half of Gela. Hieron cleared Catana and Naxos and planted his own settlers. Dionysius destroyed Naxos and Catana again and sold their populations, moved the whole people of Leontini into Syracuse, and cleared the Sicels out of Tauromenium. By the beginning of the fourth century the Greek cities of eastern Sicily — the neighbours, the natural refuges, the places a discontented Syracusan farmer might have walked to in two days and found a familiar market and a court that would hear him — had all been destroyed, emptied, or absorbed, and there was one Greek polis left on that coast.

This is ordinarily read as imperialism, and it was that. But its effect on the ordinary man's ledger is precise and, I think, was understood by the men who did it. **Where exit cannot be prohibited, it can be made pointless by removing the destinations; and a policy of destroying neighbouring cities does to the exit dial exactly what a law against flight does, without needing to be enforced against anybody.** Gelon's transfers were not simply plunder — he brought the populations *in*, which is the opposite of what a plunderer does. He was consolidating the whole population of eastern Sicily into the one place he controlled, and every city he emptied was a place his own people could no longer go.

The policy had limits and they were real. The west remained; Italy remained; the mercenary market remained, and a Syracusan with a sword could always sell it elsewhere. Timoleon's proclamation in Greece proves the door was still open in both directions in 340. But the direction of travel across the classical period is unmistakable, and it explains a fact the sources present as a puzzle: why a city that never managed to hold a stable constitution for two consecutive generations nonetheless kept growing, until Syracuse was, on Strabo's later report, a circuit of some twenty-two miles and the largest Greek city in the world. It grew partly because everywhere else had been dismantled into it.

The column nobody expects to be full

Now the surprise, and it is the finding that most changes the picture of what an ordinary Syracusan was doing.

For a large part of the common population, a large part of the time, the benefit column was full — and it was filled by the tyrants.

The pattern begins at the beginning. In 485 the demos of Syracuse, having already thrown out the landholding class in coalition with the dependent labourers, handed the city and itself to Gelon at his approach without a battle. That is not resignation; Herodotus's verb is one of handing over. The people who did it had just demonstrated they were capable of fighting their own aristocracy, and they made a judgement that an incoming general with an army was a better proposition than the return of the gamoroi on their own terms. Whether they were right is a separate question. That they were choosing, and choosing on a ledger, is not.

The pattern is explicit under Dionysius. He built his guard by picking out citizens poor in property but bold in spirit — more than a thousand of them — and arming them at his own expense with costly equipment, which handed a landless man a hoplite panoply he could never have bought. Then he took the best of the land for his friends and officers, and divided *the rest in equal portions between foreigners and citizens*, counting among the citizens the manumitted slaves he designated New Citizens. Then he distributed the dwellings of the city among the common people, keeping back only those on Ortygia for his friends and the mercenaries. A slave was made free and a citizen; a landless citizen was given land and a house; a poor man was given armour.

Agathocles, a potter's son whose family had arrived on a resettlement scheme, killed or exiled the propertied opposition — six hundred, four thousand or ten thousand, on the range the sources give — and redistributed what they had; and when he needed men for Africa he freed such slaves as were fit to serve. Timoleon divided the territory among forty thousand or more incomers who had come precisely because land and houses were on offer.

Set that beside who paid. The men Gelon sold for export were the poor of *other* cities. The men Dionysius impoverished were the propertied: Aristotle records, as an instance of the standard tyrannical device of impoverishing subjects, the taxation at Syracuse under Dionysius, the effect of which was that in five years a man had paid over the whole of his substance. The men Agathocles invited to leave the city voluntarily and killed on the road were the wealthiest of his opponents. The class against which the citadel, the informers and the mercenaries were pointed was, overwhelmingly, the class with something to lose.

From below, then, the Syracusan tyranny was a redistribution machine, and for a poor Syracusan the ledger frequently came out in its favour on the plainest arithmetic. This has to be stated without sentimentality in either direction. It does not make the tyrants benign; the same operation that gave a landless man a house took it

from someone who had been living in it, and the same commander who freed slaves fit for service sold whole populations abroad. But it explains something the moralising sources cannot, which is why this particular solution kept being chosen, by assemblies, in daylight, by men who had every reason to know what it led to. A city with an annual Festival of Liberation voted Dionysius his bodyguard sixty-one years after instituting the festival. It did so because for a substantial part of the voting population the arrangement being replaced had nothing in its benefit column at all.

And there is the trap, which Module 2 has already named. **The benefit was real and it had no title attached to it.** A man who held his house because Dionysius said so held it exactly as long as Dionysius did, which meant that from the moment he accepted it he had to want the regime to survive — not from gratitude, and not from belief, but because his own roof was on the same hook. This is the default mechanism working at the bottom of the society rather than the top: alignment without agreement. It is also why it never accumulated into anything. A settlement that re-sources title through a register produces men who defend the *arrangement*; a settlement that re-sources title through a man produces men who defend *the man*, and who will transfer that defence the moment somebody else can offer a better distribution. Every Syracusan regime was overthrown by a coalition that included people the previous regime had made.

The bottom of the ledger

For a substantial part of the population the sums did not have to be made to come out at all, because the persons in question were property, and the case supplies an unusually exact picture of what that meant.

After the Athenian defeat in 413 the prisoners were put into the stone quarries, the *latomiai*, which had been cut into the limestone at the city's edge to build its walls. Thucydides describes it:

> *The prisoners in the quarries were at first hardly treated by the Syracusans. Crowded in a narrow hole, without any roof to cover them, the heat of the sun and the stifling closeness of the air tormented them during the day, and then the nights, which came on autumnal and chilly, made them ill by the violence of the change; besides, as they had to do everything in the same place for want of room, and the bodies of those who died of their wounds or from the variation in the temperature, or from similar causes, were left heaped together one upon another, intolerable stenches arose; while hunger and thirst never ceased to afflict them,*

each man during eight months having only half a pint of water and a pint of grain given him daily.

After seventy days all except the Athenians and the Sicilian and Italian Greeks were sold. The total, Thucydides says, cannot have been less than seven thousand. Plutarch adds that those sold were branded on the forehead with the mark of a horse — the Syracusan civic badge — and that some free men suffered this in addition to their slavery.

Three things about this belong in a cost-column module rather than an atrocity list.

The first is that it was a *prison made out of a quarry*, which is to say the instrument was not built for the purpose. The stone had been cut to make the walls; the resulting pits were deep, open to the sky, and had one way out. Once again the materials at hand solved a problem nobody had gathered them for.

The second is visibility. The quarries are inside the city's circuit, a short walk from the theatre. Everybody in Syracuse knew what was in them and, for eight months, could smell it. The framework holds that a floor works by pricing defection without having to be used, and that pricing requires the price to be known. A pit of dying men in the middle of town is a very efficient piece of communication, and it was addressed to the living.

The third is the qualification, and it is Plutarch's. He records that some of the prisoners were saved by Euripides — that the Sicilians beyond any other Greeks outside Attica had a passion for his poetry, learned by heart the fragments visitors brought them, and that men who could recite were fed, freed, or taken into households. Both facts are true of the same city in the same year: the quarries, and the men let out of them for knowing the right lines. A study that reports only the first has not described the place.

Below the Athenians in the quarries sat the permanent population whose ledger never balanced: the chattel slaves in Syracusan houses and workshops, and the dependent agricultural class whose name reaches us in three spellings. For these the cost column was total and the benefit column empty, and the door was shut in the only way that reliably shuts it, which is by making the person themselves the property that would have to escape. The one thing to note is what this case does *not* have. There is no Syracusan helotry — no permanent, hereditary, ethnically-marked servile nation held down by a standing terror, because the tyrants kept converting the servile into citizens whenever they needed soldiers. The bottom of the Syracusan ledger was very deep, and it had a ladder out of it that was let down, unpredictably, by men who needed men.

The apparatus that priced refusal

For the citizen who stayed and did not comply, the cost column was filled by instruments the previous modules have already described from the other side.

The wall across Ortygia meant the ruler could not be reached. The dockyard with an entrance admitting one hull at a time meant the fleet could not be seized. The mercenaries quartered on the island meant the force that would be used against a rising slept behind a fortification and had no relatives in the city. Euryalus and the Epipolae circuit meant that a faction which took the high ground could not besiege the town from it. The whole physical plant of Syracuse by 380 was an argument addressed to a citizen contemplating action, and the argument was that he could not win.

To that Aristotle adds the surveillance, and he names it as Syracusan:

> *A tyrant should also endeavour to know what each of his subjects says or does, and should employ spies, like the 'female detectives' at Syracuse, and the eavesdroppers whom Hiero was in the habit of sending to any place of resort or meeting; for the fear of informers prevents people from speaking their minds, and if they do, they are more easily found out.*

The *potagogides* and the *otakoustai* — provocatrices and listening-ears — were sent, on Aristotle's account, wherever there was a gathering or a conference. The choice of women is instructive and Aristotle is explicit about the mechanism: men speak less freely when they fear such people, and women present at gatherings as servants, musicians or companions were not taken seriously as political agents. The instrument works because it is invisible to the people it is used on.

Note where this sits on the framework's gradient. Surveillance is the tell of a belief that never took. A ruler who has installed a formation does not need to know what is said at parties, because what is said at parties is what he installed. Hieron was among the richest and most celebrated men in the Greek world, crowned at Olympia and Delphi, sung by Pindar and Bacchylides, joint dedicator with his city of Etruscan spoils at the sanctuary of Zeus — and he was paying women to listen at dinners in his own capital. The two facts are one fact. Module 3 found the legitimating expenditure aimed at an audience five hundred miles away; here is the bill for having aimed it there.

The item the rulers went after first

But the most revealing passage in Aristotle is not about spies, and it identifies something the framework's cost-benefit-belief triad does not have a slot for.

Immediately before the sentence on informers, Aristotle lists what a tyrant must do. He must lop off the outstanding and put men of spirit to death. He must not allow common meals, clubs, or education. He must forbid literary assemblies and other meetings for discussion. And then the reason, in Jowett's rendering: he must **take every means to prevent people from knowing one another**, *for acquaintance begets mutual confidence*. Immediately after the informers comes the complement: another art of the tyrant is to sow quarrels among the citizens — friends embroiled with friends, the people with the notables, the rich with one another. And a little further on, the item Module 1 arrived at from the other direction: the tyrant is a stirrer-up of war, deliberately, both to keep the people occupied and to keep them constantly in need of a leader.

Read that as a programme and it is not primarily about force at all. It is about destroying the conditions under which a cost column can be *shared*.

An individual's ledger is not decided in private. Whether refusal is worth it depends almost entirely on how many others will refuse at the same time, and a man can only estimate that if he knows his neighbours well enough to guess what they think, and trusts them enough to find out. Dining clubs, festivals, gymnasia, discussion, common meals, education in company — these are not luxuries in a Greek city, they are the machinery by which a population discovers its own mind. Shut them, and every man's calculation is made alone and comes out the same way: nobody else will move, so I will not move. Then set the groups against each other, so that even the acquaintance which survives runs along lines of suspicion. Then start a war, so that the men who might have coordinated are in the field and grateful for a commander.

That is a fourth dial, and on the evidence of this case it is the one a ruler reaches for first, because it is cheaper than force and quicker than belief. Force has to be paid for every month. Formation takes a generation and Syracuse never attempted it. But the ability of the ruled to know each other can be attacked immediately, with festivals cancelled, clubs closed, informers at dinners and a rumour set running — and its destruction converts a population into an aggregate of individuals each of whom, correctly, calculates that acting alone is fatal. The tell that this is what was going on is that Aristotle, cataloguing tyranny in general, reaches for Syracuse for his examples.

And the sharpest evidence that the target was real is that the *democracy* attacked the same thing, from the other end, and did itself the same damage.

In 454, after a man named Tyndarides had rallied a following of the poor into a personal bodyguard and been executed for it, the Syracusan assembly instituted petalism, on the model of Athenian ostracism. Each voter wrote on an olive leaf the name of the most powerful citizen; whoever received the most votes went into exile for

five years. Crucially — and unlike the Athenian instrument, which required a quorum — there was no threshold. Somebody was exiled every time it was held. Diodorus records the consequence: the men of substance and standing, finding themselves permanently at risk, withdrew from public affairs altogether and attended to their private business; leadership passed to men without reputation who were prepared to say anything; faction and disorder increased; and the Syracusans repealed the law.

Petalism is worth more attention than it usually gets, and the modern doubts about the physical detail — writing legibly on an olive leaf is not easy, and at least one specialist has argued that Diodorus has misunderstood something — do not touch its substance, which is corroborated by its effect. Here is a democracy that identified the same danger the tyrants did, prominence in a private citizen, and reached for the same solution, which was to make association and standing hazardous. And the result was that the city hollowed out its own public life within a few years and had to reverse itself.

Two regimes, opposite in every constitutional respect, arriving at the same instrument. **What both were attacking was the capacity of citizens to accumulate trust and reputation among one another — the tyrant because that capacity is what makes him removable, and the democracy because that capacity is what makes a tyrant.** They were both right, and that is the difficulty. The item that lets a population resist a ruler is the same item that lets a man become one, and no Syracusan regime ever found a way to have the first without the second.

Two other desks

The subject Greek city. For a farmer at Leontini or Catana after 403, the ledger was simpler and worse than a Syracusan's. His city no longer existed as a political community; his own assembly did not meet; his land was liable to be reassigned to discharged soldiers; and his exit options had been destroyed by the same power that governed him. The record shows what such men did whenever the pressure lifted: Leontini revolted or seceded from Syracuse repeatedly across the fourth century, the Chalcidian cities took Athens's side in 427 and again in 415, and every Carthaginian invasion found allies among the Greek cities of the east. Compliance here was pure cost-column and lasted exactly as long as the enforcer could reach.

The Sicel in the interior. Here the framework's expectation of a different answer for core and periphery is met exactly. Distance emptied the cost column: a village in the hills above Leontini was three days from a Syracusan army and could not be watched, and the standing garrisons at Acrae and Casmenae covered the routes rather than the country. The consequence is legible in the timing of every Sicel rising. Ducetius built his confederation in the 460s and 450s — in the years immediately after the

Deinomenid tyranny collapsed and while Syracuse was fighting its own enfranchised mercenaries. The interior revolted whenever the coast was busy, which is the behaviour of a population whose compliance was priced by force alone and who could read the price accurately. And when the price went back up, they complied again.

Reading the Syracusan cost column against the framework

The exit dial was jammed open, and the ruler's answer was to close the destinations. This is the module's first contribution and it generalises beyond Sicily. The framework treats exit as a dial the ruler turns down by prohibition — laws against flight, passes, registration, the closed frontier. Syracuse could not do any of that and never tried. What it did instead, across three centuries and always with other justifications available, was to destroy or absorb every alternative Greek city within reach, until the coast that had held eight *poleis* held one. **Where exit cannot be prohibited, it can be made pointless by eliminating the places worth going to; and imperial expansion, in a landscape of comparable neighbours, is functionally identical to a law against flight.** Any case in this collection where a power systematically dismantles its nearest peers should be re-read with that in mind.

The benefit column can be filled by the same act that empties another man's, and a ruler who can perform that transfer needs much less coercion than his reputation suggests. For the poor of Syracuse the tyranny was frequently the best offer on the table — arms, land, houses, citizenship, freedom from slavery — and the men who paid were the propertied. This is the framework's ledger working exactly as specified, and it corrects a habit of reading autocracy as something imposed on a uniformly unwilling population. It was chosen, repeatedly, in assemblies, by people doing arithmetic. **The condition of its recurrence is a settlement with no instrument: where holdings can be reassigned by decree, there is always a majority who would gain from the reassignment, and therefore always a constituency for the man who will perform it.** That is the deepest reason the Syracusan cycle turned, and it is a mechanism, not a defect of Syracusan character.

But a benefit with no title attached buys the person and not the order. The man given a house by Dionysius had to want Dionysius to survive, which is alignment without agreement, and it worked — and it decayed the instant a better distributor appeared, which is why every regime here was overthrown by a coalition containing its own beneficiaries. Compare the colonial settlements that lasted: what made them last was not that the beneficiaries were more grateful but that their titles ran through a register, so that defending the arrangement and defending their own fields were the

same act. **Gratitude decays and dependence does not, and only an instrument converts the first into the second.**

The module's central contribution is the fourth item. The framework's account of the ordinary subject's compliance runs on cost, benefit, and belief, with exit as the modifier. Syracuse shows a fourth term that is prior to all of them, because it determines whether the sums are done alone or together: **the capacity of the ruled to know and trust one another.** Aristotle, cataloguing what a tyrant must do and drawing his examples from Syracuse, puts it before the informers and gives the reason in five words — acquaintance begets mutual confidence. Prohibit the clubs, the common meals, the education in company and the meetings for discussion; set friend against friend and the people against the notables; put listeners at every dinner; and start a war. None of that raises the price of refusal by an obol. What it does is guarantee that no man can estimate how many others would move with him, so that each of them concludes, correctly, that he would move alone.

And the fourth dial cuts both ways, which is why nobody could leave it alone. Petalism is the same instrument in democratic hands — a law designed to prevent any citizen from accumulating enough standing to become dangerous, which within a few years had driven the substantial men out of public life, handed the assembly to whoever was loudest, and had to be repealed. A tyrant attacks horizontal trust because it is what makes him removable. A free city attacks it because it is what makes tyrants. They are attacking the same thing, and it is the same thing because the capacity of citizens to coordinate is simultaneously the only defence against a ruler and the only ladder to becoming one. **No arrangement in this case ever solved that, and the failure to solve it is a better account of why Syracuse could not hold a constitution for two generations than any explanation resting on the character of particular men.**

The module that follows takes up extraction — how much was actually taken, from whom, and by what mechanisms — and the exit dial has already set its ceiling. A man with legs, a trade and a boat two days away cannot be taken down to the bone; a man whose city has been dismantled into Syracuse, or who is himself somebody's property, can be. The bill, as ever, was sorted.

A note on sources. Thucydides 7.87 on the quarries is quoted from Richard Crawley's public-domain translation of 1874, with the figure of not less than seven thousand as Thucydides gives it; he is writing within a decade or two of the events, from a position hostile to the Athenian command rather than to Syracuse, and the eight-month figure applies to the Athenians retained after the seventy days. The branding with a horse and the Euripides anecdote are Plutarch, *Nicias* 29, quoted from Bernadotte Perrin's Loeb of 1916, out of copyright; Plutarch is at five centuries' distance and the Euripides story

has the shape of a good story, but it is not implausible and is reported here as what the tradition preserved rather than as established fact. Aristotle, *Politics* 5.11 (1313b), supplies the *potagogides* and *otakoustai*, the prohibition of clubs, common meals, education and meetings, the injunction to prevent people from knowing one another, the sowing of quarrels, the deliberate stirring-up of war, and the taxation at Syracuse under Dionysius said to have absorbed a man's whole substance in five years; the translation quoted is Benjamin Jowett's of 1885, which is out of copyright. Aristotle is writing a generation after Dionysius I and two after Hieron I, is systematically hostile to tyranny as a constitutional form, and is compiling a typology rather than reporting an investigation — his Syracusan details are the best evidence we have and should be read as a philosopher's illustrative examples, not as archival findings. Petalism is known exclusively from Diodorus 11.86–87, which is a single late witness; the modern objection that writing legibly on an olive leaf is impractical has been raised in the specialist literature and is noted, and the substance of the account is supported chiefly by its coherence with the recorded consequence, the withdrawal of the propertied and the law's repeal. Herodotus 7.155 supplies the handing over of Syracuse to Gelon in 485. Diodorus 13.96 and 14.7 supply Dionysius's arming of the propertyless and the distribution of land and dwellings; 16.82–83 and Plutarch, *Timoleon* 23, the resettlement. The figures for Agathocles' purge range from six hundred to ten thousand across Diodorus, Justin and later summaries and are given as that range. Strabo 6.2.4 is the source for the circuit of Syracuse and describes the city of his own day. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited: James C. Scott on the hidden transcript and on the relation between state control and terrain; Franco De Angelis on Sicilian demography and settlement; Eric W. Robinson on Syracusan democracy and on petalism; and the specialist literature on Greek surveillance practice (F. S. Russell, *Information Gathering in Classical Greece*). The so-called Ear of Dionysius in the Latomia del Paradiso is a name given to the cave by Caravaggio in 1608 and has no ancient authority whatever; it is mentioned here only to be excluded.

Module 6 · A GOLDEN MANTLE IS OPPRESSIVE IN SUMMER

Module 6: extraction — what was taken, from whom, by what devices, and the difference between a ruler who takes by ambush and one who takes by rule

What the take had to cover

Extraction in most of the cases in this collection is shaped by a purpose: a metropolitan treasury to be remitted to, a court to be maintained, a religious establishment to be endowed, a debt to be serviced. At Syracuse it is shaped by a wage bill.

Module 1 established the mechanism and it needs only to be restated as an accounting fact. From 485 onward the decisive force in this city was purchased, and a purchased force has to be purchased again next month. Six hundred spearmen, then more than a thousand, then the mercenaries of Gela, then contingents from four nations equipped in four national patterns, then a fleet of three hundred ships, then a fortress on Epipolae, then a hundred and forty thousand pieces of ironmongery — every item on that list arrives as a standing charge that does not care whether anything is happening. And unlike a tribute obligation or a court, the charge cannot be deferred, because the creditors are armed and quartered inside the citadel.

So the question this module asks is not what fiscal theory the Syracusans held. They held none that anyone recorded. It is: when a ruler must produce silver by a particular month or lose his floor, and he has no register of property, no assessment roll, no revenue department and no tradition of regular direct taxation, what does he actually do?

The answer survives in unusual detail, because a fourth-century compiler thought it worth collecting.

The ceiling, and who sits above it

Before the devices, the limit. Module 5 established that exit at Syracuse was jammed open — an island crowded with Greek cities, Italy a day away, no law against flight ever recorded, and a permanent political class in exile at any given moment. That sets a ceiling on what can be taken from anybody with legs, a trade and somewhere to go.

The framework's rule is that where every door is shut the floor sinks toward the biological bone, and where doors are open the extractor must stop short of the point at which his taxpayers become somebody else's. Syracuse confirms it from the open end. There is no plantation here, no mine worked to death, no *corvée* system, no head tax on a peasantry that cannot move. What there is instead is a pattern of extraction that falls with great weight on two groups who could not leave — those who were themselves property, and those whose property was immovable — and comparatively lightly on the mobile middle.

That sorting is the same one Module 2 found in the settlement, and it runs on the same axis. The Syracusan take was sorted by wealth, not by descent: the man with land, a house, plate and livestock was the man who could be reached, precisely because his wealth could not be carried onto a boat. **Immobile property is the tax base of a state that cannot close its borders**, and everything in the catalogue that follows is aimed at wealth that stands still.

The catalogue

The pseudo-Aristotelian *Oeconomica*, a fourth- or third-century compilation of fiscal expedients gathered from across the Greek world, devotes more space to Dionysius of Syracuse than to any other single ruler. Read one by one the items look like anecdotes. Read together they are a system, and the system has a shape.

He needed money for a fleet, so he called an assembly and announced that a certain city was being offered to him by traitors and he required funds to pay them; each citizen was to contribute two staters. The money came in. Two or three days later he announced that the plot had failed, thanked the citizens, and returned every contribution.

He wanted funds again, so he called an assembly and announced that Demeter had appeared to him and instructed him that the women's ornaments were to be conveyed into her temple. They were conveyed. He took them.

He asked the citizens to contribute and they said they had nothing. So he brought out the furnishings of his own palace and put them up for public sale, as a man reduced to selling his household goods. At the sale a list was made of every article and every purchaser. When all had paid, he ordered each buyer to bring back what he had bought.

He had all the livestock in the territory valued and imposed a tax on it. The owners, seeing what was coming, began killing and selling their beasts. He decreed that only such animals might be slaughtered as were needed for each day's consumption. The owners then simply stopped rearing stock at all — at which point he proclaimed that

he would require no further money until a stated date, so that anyone acquiring animals now would not be liable. They restocked.

He borrowed money from the citizens with a promise of repayment. When repayment was demanded, he ordered every man, on pain of death, to bring in whatever silver he possessed. The silver was brought. He struck it into drachmae each bearing the face value of two, and with these repaid both the original loan and the silver just deposited.

During a shortage of silver he issued a coinage of tin and persuaded the assembly to vote that it should be reckoned as silver.

He raided the Etruscan coast with a hundred ships and stripped the temple of Leucothea at Pyrgi of a great quantity of gold, silver and works of art — Diodorus puts the temple's yield at a thousand talents and another five hundred from the sale of captives. Knowing his own crews had taken plunder of their own, he proclaimed that each was to surrender half, on the understanding that the remainder would be secure. They complied. He then required the other half.

And at home, touring the temples: wherever he saw a table of gold or silver set before a god he called for a cup to be filled *in honour of the good spirit*, and had the table carried out; wherever a precious bowl stood before an image he ordered its removal with the words *I accept it*; and he stripped the statues of their golden robes and garlands, announcing that he would give them lighter and more fragrant wear, and dressed them in white linen and garlands of white poplar.

Cicero adds two more from a hostile tradition. Having plundered the temple of Persephone at Locri and enjoyed a following wind home, he observed to his friends what a good crossing the immortal gods bestow on the sacrilegious. And, arriving at a temple of Olympian Zeus, he stripped from the god a gold mantle of great weight, remarking that gold was oppressive in summer and cold in winter, and threw a woollen cloak over him as being suitable for all seasons.

The provenance of that mantle is the sentence this module is named for, and Cicero states it. It was the one **the tyrant Gelo had dedicated out of the spoils of the Carthaginians.**

The robe melted down

Stay with that for a moment, because it is the whole study performed as a single act.

Module 3 traced the enormous Deinomenid expenditure on legitimacy — the horses at Olympia, the poets on retainer, the bronze at Delphi, the helmet inscribed jointly by Hieron and the Syracusans, and the dedications made out of the Himera indemnity. That expenditure bought standing among Greeks and bought nothing at

home; it did not reduce the cost of ruling Syracuse by an obol, and the module concluded that a legitimating outlay aimed outside the governed body is a purchase of status rather than a robe.

Ninety years later a Syracusan ruler with a payroll due took the physical object off the god and had it weighed.

That is what happens to a robe that was never driven into anybody. It stays a commodity, because that is all it ever was: gold on a statue, convertible at any time by any successor who needs cash more than he needs the god's good opinion. A formation cannot be stripped and melted; the whole point of driving belief into a generation of children is that it exists in a form no successor can liquidate. Gelon's mantle could be liquidated because Gelon had bought an object rather than installed a disposition, and Dionysius liquidated it, and made a joke.

What unites the devices

Now read the catalogue as a system, because every item shares a property that is more important than any of them individually.

Not one of them is a rule. There is no rate, no schedule, no assessment roll, no register of who owns what, no revenue office, no calendar of collection, and no method a taxpayer could learn. The livestock valuation comes closest to an ordinary tax and it lasted one season. Everything else is a single event, unrepeatable by design: a vision, a fictitious conspiracy, a fake bankruptcy sale, a forced deposit, a raid.

This is the same absence Module 2 found in the settlement, appearing on the revenue side, and it produces the same two consequences.

The first is that extraction becomes ambush, and ambush has a declining yield. The Syracusans in the *Oeconomica* are not passive; every device is met with a counter-move, and the compiler records the counter-moves. When the livestock tax was imposed, people killed their animals. When slaughter was restricted, they stopped rearing them. The tax base did not merely resist; it *disappeared*, because when the rate is unknowable the rational response is to hold no taxable thing. Dionysius then had to bribe the base back into existence with a declared window of immunity — an amnesty offered by a ruler to his own subjects to persuade them to own property again.

That episode is the mechanism caught in the act, and it is worth stating in general terms. **A tax that cannot be predicted is not merely resented; it makes the holding of visible wealth irrational, and a state that extracts by ambush therefore destroys the base it feeds on and must periodically pay to have it rebuilt.** The framework's account of the extraction ceiling runs on two dials, force and exit. This case adds a third condition, and it is not about the ruled's tolerance but about their calculation as

producers: whether the extractor has a rule. Where he does, the payer can plan around the take and keep producing. Where he does not, production itself becomes the exposure.

The second is that nothing accumulates. A device that depends on a vision of Demeter cannot be used twice; a successor cannot repeat a fictitious plot; a restriking of the coinage is available once before nobody brings silver in again. Dionysius's fiscal apparatus, like his floor and his settlement, was personal, ingenious and non-transmissible. His son inherited the empire and none of the machinery, because there was no machinery — only a set of tricks that had already been played on the people they would have to be played on again.

And the deception is doing specific work that should be named rather than moralised about. Each device is constructed so that the citizen parts with his silver for a reason that is not "the ruler requires it": to buy a city, to honour a goddess, to help a man in difficulty, to lend at interest, to acquire a bargain at a sale. The taking is disguised as a transaction, which is precisely what the modern colonial statutes in this collection do at far greater length and expense. **Where there is no metropole to satisfy, a ruler still has an audience for his fictions — his own taxpayers — and the fiction is cheap, short-lived and repeated rather than elaborate, permanent and codified.** The landscape of this study found that the *conquest* required no fiction because nobody had to be persuaded. Extraction is different: the man being taxed is present, is armed in his own way, and can hide his silver. He has to be told something.

Aristotle's rate

One figure survives that purports to give the scale, and it comes from a philosopher a generation later. Listing the standard tyrannical device of impoverishing the subjects so that they cannot maintain a guard and have no leisure to conspire, Aristotle gives as an instance the levying of taxes at Syracuse, the effect of which under Dionysius was that in five years a man had contributed the whole of his substance.

Twenty per cent of capital a year, if taken literally, is a confiscatory rate that no economy sustains, and it should not be taken literally. Aristotle is compiling a typology of tyranny, not auditing accounts; his purpose in the passage is to show that impoverishment is deliberate policy rather than incidental. What the figure is good evidence for is the *impression* the Dionysian fisc left on informed Greeks within living memory: not a heavy tax, which every Greek understood, but a regime under which a propertied man could expect to be stripped entire within a few years. Given the catalogue above, that impression is not hard to account for.

Note also the framing. Aristotle does not present the taxation as a means of raising revenue. He presents it as a means of keeping subjects poor and busy, which is a *political* purpose, and he lists it beside the pyramids and the temple-building of other tyrants as an instance of the same principle. That is a claim worth taking seriously in a study organised around the cost column: on Aristotle's reading, part of the point of Syracusan extraction was the extraction itself, because a man who has just handed over his substance cannot equip himself, cannot leave with capital, and has no leisure for politics. **Extraction can be a floor-instrument rather than a revenue instrument, and where it is, the usual question of whether the take is efficient has been asked in the wrong currency.**

The one man who wrote it down

Against all of this sits Hieron II, and the contrast is the most instructive thing in the module.

He did not, so far as any source records, plunder a temple, strike a debased coin, stage a fictitious conspiracy or confiscate an estate. What he did instead was to put agricultural taxation on a written footing: a tithe of the grain crop — a tenth — assessed and collected through a formal contract between the grower and the tithe-collector, with a specified procedure and a specified court for disputes between them. Around it he built the physical apparatus such a system needs: standardised grain measures across his territory, monumental granaries, and a bronze coinage circulating at the level of ordinary transactions. Recent archaeology has recovered a good deal of this — the measures, the granaries, the pattern of rural land use — and it shows an administration rather than a set of expedients.

Then the sequel, which is the point. When Rome took Sicily, the Roman authorities examined this arrangement and kept it. They kept the rate, they kept the procedure, and Cicero, prosecuting a Roman governor for breaking it a century and a half later, explains why they kept even the name: it was thought better that the Sicilians' minds should not be disturbed by a new law — nor even, he says, by a *new name* for a law. The cases between growers and tithe-collectors were still being tried, in Cicero's day, under the corn law they called the Hieronican.

Set the two systems side by side.

Dionysius took, on the impression he left, something approaching a fifth of a man's capital a year, by devices that could not be anticipated, could not be repeated, destroyed the base they fed on, and left his successor nothing to inherit. Hieron took a tenth of the *flow* — not the capital — by a published rule, and his instrument outlived him by two centuries, survived a foreign conquest intact, and was preserved by the conquerors

under his own name because they could not think of an improvement and did not want to alarm the taxpayers.

The lower rate produced more, for longer, and produced something inheritable, and it did so because it was a rule. That is not a moral observation about Hieron, who came to power through mercenaries and disposed of them by feeding them to an enemy. It is a structural one, and it can be stated in the terms this collection uses for the settlement: an instrument re-sources a relation. A grower under the Hieronican law was not paying because a man with soldiers had told him to; he was paying under a procedure that would still be there next year, and that he could invoke in court against the collector. That is why the Romans kept it — a tax the payer will bring a lawsuit under rather than hide from is a cheap tax to collect.

Where it went

Follow the surplus and the distribution is stark.

The overwhelming share went to the floor: wages for foreign soldiers, the arsenal at Syracuse, three hundred ships, the wall across Ortygia, the Epipolae circuit and Euryalus, the siege train. A second share went to the peer audience — the chariots, the tents at Olympia, the dedications, the poets. A third went to the ruler's *philoi*, the friends and senior officers who received the best land and the houses on the island.

What received nothing worth naming is as telling. There is no Syracusan investment in formation — no schools, no priesthood on salary teaching a doctrine, no state provision for the young. There is no investment in a land register, a cadastre, an archive or a court of title, which is to say the state never spent a drachma on the one instrument that would have made its own settlement durable. And with the single exception of Hieron's granaries and measures, there is no investment in the machinery of collection itself.

A state's capital budget is a statement of what its rulers believed they were doing, and this one says that they believed they were holding a position for as long as they personally could. Every drachma went into things that work this year: soldiers who will be paid again next month, walls that stand while somebody mans them, and a reputation abroad that dies with its owner. Nothing went into anything designed to still be working when its builder was dead — until a man arrived who intended to reign for fifty years, and built a tax code.

Reading Syracusan extraction against the framework

The ceiling behaved as the framework predicts, and the sorting confirms Module 2. Exit held the take down for anyone mobile, and the weight fell on those who were themselves property and on those whose property could not be moved. There is no floor-scraping here, no plantation and no bonded peasantry, because the door was open — and the corollary is that a ruler in this position taxes buildings, land, plate and livestock rather than persons. **Where borders cannot be closed, the tax base is whatever cannot be carried onto a boat.**

The module's contribution is a third condition on the extraction ceiling, alongside force and exit: whether the extractor has a rule. The framework's account so far has treated the ceiling as set by what the ruled will endure before revolting, adjusted by their ability to flee. Syracuse shows a constraint that operates before either — the payer's decision about whether to hold taxable wealth at all. Dionysius's livestock tax is the mechanism recorded in a primary source: valuation, then slaughter, then a decree against slaughter, then the abandonment of stock-rearing altogether, then an amnesty offered to persuade people to own animals again. **An unpredictable take does not merely reduce compliance; it makes visible wealth irrational, so that the base contracts and has to be repurchased. Extraction by ambush has a declining yield, and a state that lives on it must periodically pay its own subjects to become taxable.**

The corollary is that a revenue rule is among the cheapest legitimating instruments available, and the Roman decision proves it. Hieron's tithe was a tenth against Dionysius's reputed fifth of capital, and it produced a stable kingdom for fifty-four years and a provincial system for two centuries after. When Rome conquered the island it retained not only the mechanism but the name, on the explicit reasoning that the taxpayers should not be unsettled by a new law or even a new title for one. That is a robe made out of a tax code, worn by foreign conquerors, in the name of a dead Greek king. **A published rule specifying what will be taken and by what procedure does more legitimating work than any monument, because unlike a monument it is consulted by the governed in their own interest.** It also sharpens Module 3's finding into a general shape: what Syracuse *bought* with its surplus — the horses, the tents, the odes — is remembered only as anecdote; what it *made* out of its constraints, the art of arguing without evidence and the tithe assessed by contract, was adopted across the Mediterranean and outlived the city.

A subsidiary finding on fiction. The landscape of this study concluded that where there is no metropole to persuade, a conquest is simply reported — the dispossession stated in a participle, with no legal fiction at all. Extraction turns out to be the

exception, and the reason identifies the limit of that finding. The Sicels evicted in 733 had no leverage and required no explanation. A Syracusan householder with silver in a jar has leverage: he can hide it, spend it, or carry it away. So he must be told something — that a city is being bought, that Demeter has spoken, that the ruler is selling his own furniture, that the money is a loan. **A fiction is produced wherever somebody's voluntary cooperation is needed and cannot be compelled, and the elaborateness of the fiction tracks how much cooperation is required rather than how much force is available.** Dionysius commanded the largest military establishment in the Greek world and still had to invent a vision of Demeter, because soldiers cannot find silver that has been buried.

And the image the module is named for should be left standing without commentary. Gelon spent the Carthaginian indemnity on a gold mantle for Olympian Zeus, and the mantle was still on the god ninety years later when a Syracusan ruler with a wage bill took it off, weighed it, replaced it with wool, and observed that gold is oppressive in summer and cold in winter. The floor consumed the robe. In this case it was possible because the robe had always been an object.

The module that follows takes up information and suppression — who was permitted to know what, and what happened to men who wrote the wrong history. It will find a court historian who served a tyrant, a rival who was exiled by another and hated all of them, and the uncomfortable fact that almost everything in the six modules just concluded reaches us through one or the other.

A note on sources. The catalogue of Dionysian fiscal devices is from the pseudo-Aristotelian *Oeconomica* II (1349a–1350a), given here in close paraphrase with G. C. Armstrong's Loeb translation consulted and short phrases marked. The *Oeconomica* is not by Aristotle; Book II is a compilation of anecdotes about revenue-raising assembled probably in the late fourth or third century, its sources are unknown, and its purpose is illustrative rather than documentary — several of its stories about other rulers are demonstrably folkloric, and the collection should be read as evidence of what Greeks believed a hard-pressed ruler did rather than as an audit. Its concentration on Dionysius is itself significant and is treated here as such. Aristotle, *Politics* 5.11 (1313b), supplies the taxation said to have absorbed a citizen's whole substance in five years, quoted in Benjamin Jowett's public-domain translation of 1885; Aristotle is writing within living memory, is systematically hostile to tyranny as a constitutional form, and is illustrating a thesis, so the figure is reported as an impression rather than a rate. Diodorus 15.14 gives the Pyrgi raid at a thousand talents from the temple and five hundred from the sale of captives; Diodorus is a first-century BC Sicilian working through Timaeus and Philistus and his talent-figures throughout this study are single-

source and uncorroborated. Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 3.83–84, supplies the Locri and Olympian Zeus episodes and the provenance of the mantle as Gelon's dedication from Carthaginian spoils; the Latin of 3.83 is quoted in the notes above. Cicero places the temple in the Peloponnese, which would make it Olympia itself, and a Syracusan raid on Olympia is unrecorded elsewhere and is difficult to credit; some have supposed a confusion with the Olympieion at Syracuse, and the location is here left unresolved while the substance — that Dionysius stripped a gold mantle dedicated by Gelon out of the Himera spoils — is retained, since Cicero is specific about the dedicator. The Deinomenid indemnity of two thousand talents after Himera is Diodorus 11.26 and is a tradition rather than a figure. For the *lex Hieronica*, the primary source is Cicero's *Verrines*, principally 2.2.32 and 2.3.12–15; the Latin *inter aratores et decumanos lege frumentaria, quam Hieronicam appellant, iudicia fiunt* is quoted, and the passage on retaining the old law and even its old name is at *Verr.* 2.3. Cicero is prosecuting and is therefore invested in showing the pre-existing system as just and Verres as its violator, but the mechanics he describes are not seriously disputed, and the date at which the law took its Roman form is uncertain — probably between the Punic Wars. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited: D. Alex Walthall on Hieron's fiscal administration, the granaries, the standardised measures and the bronze coinage; R. T. Pritchard on Cicero and the *lex Hieronica*; John Serrati on Sicilian taxation between the Punic Wars; and the numismatic literature (Boehringer and others) on the identification of the Dionysian tin coinage. No total revenue figure is given for any Syracusan regime because none can be defended.

Module 7 · TAKE ME AWAY TO THE QUARRIES

Module 7: information and suppression — what a Syracusan was permitted to know, how a lie deposed a board of generals in a week, and why almost everything in this study reaches us from two men who were driven out of Sicily

The module that has to turn round

Every study in this collection reaches a point where it must examine the pipe its own evidence came down. At Syracuse that point is not a caveat at the end; it is the substance of the module, because the men who wrote the history of this city were participants in its suppression — one as an instrument of it, one as its victim — and they hated each other.

The order of business is therefore: what an ordinary Syracusan could find out; how that channel was used to take the city in 405; what happened to men who said the wrong thing; who wrote the record; and what follows for anything the preceding six modules have asserted.

What a citizen could know

Begin with an absence, and state its limits carefully, because the temptation is to make it a Syracusan pathology when it is nothing of the kind.

Syracuse has left almost no inscribed public decrees. There is no Syracusan equivalent of the stelai that line the Athenian record — no assembly resolutions cut in stone and set up where citizens walked, no tribute lists, no accounts of public works, no inventories of sacred property. What survives from Syracuse in the epigraphic line is dedications, coins, funerary texts, and, from the Hellenistic period, seat-reservations in the theatre naming the royal women.

The temptation is to read that as concealment. It is not, and the comparison that makes it look like concealment is itself the distortion. Athens is the outlier. Something in the order of twenty thousand Athenian inscriptions survive from antiquity, and specialists are clear that no other Greek community inscribed public documents on anything approaching that scale; the Athenian decree culture emerges in the fifth century as a specific product of a specific democracy and its empire, and where it

spreads it spreads by imitation of Athens. Most Greek cities, most of the time, did what Syracuse did, which was to keep their decisions in whatever wooden or archival form has not survived and to inscribe stone only for gods and the dead.

But the fact remains, and it has consequences for the ordinary man's position whatever its cause. **A Syracusan had no durable public record he could consult.** He could not walk to a wall and read what the assembly had voted last year. He could not check a general's account against a published figure. He could not verify that a magistrate's claim about precedent was true. Whatever he knew about the city's business, he knew because somebody had told him — in the assembly, in the agora, or at a festival — and the telling was oral, momentary, and unrepeatable.

That has already had a consequence in this study and it can now be named as the same fact seen from another side. Module 4 found that when the tyranny fell in 466 the courts filled with land claims that no document could settle, and that the systematic art of persuasion was invented to argue them from probability. That was not an accident of one crisis. It is what an entire political culture looks like when nothing is written down: **where the record is oral, the question is never what was decided but what can be made to sound like what was decided, and the man who speaks best is not merely influential — he is, functionally, the archive.**

How a lie took the city

The clearest demonstration is the one Module 1 traced as a floor operation and which needs re-reading here as an information operation, because that is what it primarily was.

In 406 Acragas fell to Carthage after an eight-month siege, and the Syracusan relief force under a board of generals had failed to save it. Dionysius, a man of middling rank in his mid-twenties, rose in the assembly and accused the generals of having taken Carthaginian money. There is no evidence that they had. The accusation had two properties that made it work: it was unfalsifiable, since a bribe leaves no trace a Syracusan could check; and it explained a defeat that the assembly badly wanted explained. The generals were deposed and Dionysius was elected among their replacements.

The assembly's response to his language had already been tested. On an earlier occasion it had fined him for what the tradition calls seditious speech — which was the standard Greek instrument for policing what could be said in public, a penalty in money imposed by the body being spoken to. And here the instrument met its limit, in a detail that deserves more attention than it usually gets. Philistus, a rich Syracusan,

paid the fine, and undertook to keep paying it for as long as the assembly saw fit to keep imposing it.

A fine is a price, and a price can be underwritten. The assembly's only mechanism for restraining a dangerous speaker had been converted, by one wealthy backer, into a subscription. From that point Dionysius could say anything, and the body he was saying it to had nothing left to answer with. It is the smallest and most exact illustration in this study of how a rule that binds most people ceases to bind the one person it needed to bind.

Then the venue. Elected *strategos autokrator*, Dionysius ordered the levy of men under forty to muster at Leontini with thirty days' provisions. Leontini at that date was full of exiles and non-Syracusans and was not Syracuse. The assembly that then voted him a guard of six hundred men of his own choosing was an assembly of soldiers in a garrison town, away from their households, their neighbours and the rest of the citizen body — which is to say Dionysius had changed the composition of the room before putting the question. Module 5 established that the thing rulers here reached for first was the capacity of citizens to know and gauge one another. Moving the decision to Leontini did that at a stroke, without prohibiting anything.

So: an unverifiable accusation, a penalty neutralised by a patron, a relocated audience, and a staged attack on himself. Four information operations and one vote, and the city was gone. No walls were stormed.

What happened to men who said the wrong thing

The suppression proper is thinly documented and the best-attested episode is, characteristically, about poetry.

Diodorus introduces it with a formula this study has met before. In Sicily, he writes, Dionysius, **now that he was relieved of his wars with the Carthaginians**, was at leisure — and what he turned to was the composition of verse. The identical construction opens the account of the wall across Ortygia at 14.7.1. Twice, at the point where the external war stops, Diodorus reaches for the same phrase, and twice what follows is an operation against the Syracusans. Module 1 argued that a war is the cheapest robe available to a ruler whose army must be paid; here is the same historian noting, at a second interval, that peace turned the tyrant's attention inward.

Dionysius kept poets. Among them was Philoxenus of Cythera, one of the best-known lyric poets of the age, who had begun life as a slave taken at the Athenian capture of his island. Dionysius read out his own verses and required praise. Philoxenus declined to give it, and was sent to the quarries. Friends interceded; he was brought up;

Dionysius performed again before an audience that duly applauded, and asked the poet how he liked it now. Philoxenus turned to the guards and said:

ἄπαγέ με εἰς τὰς λατομίας
Take me away to the quarries.

The line became a Greek proverb, recorded in the lexicographic tradition as being used of those who will not put up with what is unworthy.

Four things about this episode earn it the module's title.

The first is the instrument. The quarries are the same pits in which the Athenian prisoners had died fifty years earlier, cut to build the city's walls and repurposed as the place where the state put people it wished to be rid of. A poet who would not praise and a defeated army are handled by the same hole in the ground.

The second is what the episode reveals about the ruler's actual problem. Dionysius commanded the largest military establishment in the Greek world, held a walled island against his own citizens, and had the whole apparatus described in Modules 1 and 5. What he could not obtain was a single competent man's honest praise, and the reason he wanted it is the reason Module 3 identified: his legitimating expenditure was aimed at a peer audience of Greeks, and Philoxenus was that audience made flesh and sitting at his table. The tents at Olympia were looted in 388; the poet at the dinner refused in the same decade. The quarry is what a man does when the audience will not be bought and cannot be compelled.

The third is that the tradition is not secure and the study should say so. Diodorus gives the poetry as the cause; Athenaeus, drawing on a fourth-century source, says Philoxenus was sent to the quarries for attempting to seduce Dionysius' mistress Galatea. The two versions may be a doublet, or the second may be the real reason and the first the literary improvement. What is not in doubt is that Philoxenus was in the quarries and that Greeks told the story of the tyrant and the poet as a story about the tyrant's vanity.

The fourth is what happened next, and it is the finding this module builds on. Philoxenus wrote the *Cyclops*, in which Polyphemus — one-eyed, Sicilian, and lovesick — sings clumsily to a Galatea who wants nothing to do with him, while a clever man talks his way out of the cave. Everyone understood who Polyphemus was. The poem was performed and famous in Athens by 388, when Aristophanes parodied it. And when Dionysius later wrote asking him to return, Philoxenus, on the tradition, took a sheet of papyrus and covered it with the single letter *o* — the negative — repeated across the page.

The tyrant put a critic in a hole, and the critic produced the most durable insult of the fourth century and delivered it from beyond his reach.

The two men who wrote it down

Which brings the module to its own foundations.

Philistus was born at Syracuse around 432. He was rich, and it was his money that neutralised the fine and put Dionysius beyond the assembly's reach in 406. He became commander of the citadel — that is, the man in charge of Ortygia, the walled island where the mercenaries were quartered and the fleet was locked behind a one-ship gate. In 386 he married the daughter of Dionysius' brother Leptines without the tyrant's permission; Dionysius, suspecting an alliance against him, banished them both. Philistus went to Thurii and then to Adria, and there, in exile, wrote his *Sikelika* — eleven or thirteen books, from the earliest times to the capture of Acragas in 406, and then the history of the elder and younger Dionysius. On the tyrant's death in 367 he was recalled by the son, whom he persuaded to dismiss Plato and to banish Dion. When Dion came back with an army in 357 Philistus was given command of the fleet, was defeated, and was killed.

Cicero, who admired him, called him the miniature Thucydides — *pusillus Thucydides*. The Alexandrian critics admitted him to the canon. Alexander the Great is said to have valued the work.

So the principal contemporary historian of the Dionysian tyranny was its financier at the outset, its castle-keeper in the middle, its admiral at the end, and wrote his account during a period of banishment imposed by its founder. There is no reading of that biography under which the resulting history is disinterested, and there is also no reading under which it is uninformed. He was in the room.

Timaeus was born at Tauromenium around 350, and his father's biography is the other half of the story. Andromachus had refounded Tauromenium in 358 with the surviving inhabitants of Naxos — the city Dionysius I had destroyed in 403, selling its people and giving its land away. Timaeus was therefore raised in a town constituted out of the wreckage of a Syracusan tyrant's operation, by a father who had gathered the survivors.

Around 315 he was driven out of Sicily by Agathocles, and spent at least fifty years in Athens, where he wrote thirty-eight books of Sicilian history running from mythical times to Agathocles' death in 289 — the first substantial Greek treatment of the western Mediterranean, and the work that established dating by Olympiads. He also wrote, by common consent, with a settled hatred of tyrants, and with such severity toward his predecessors that he acquired the nickname *Epitimaios*, the fault-finder.

Plutarch says he set out to show Philistus vulgar and amateurish in every respect. Polybius devoted the greater part of Book 12 to demolishing him, on the grounds that a man who had spent fifty years in an Athenian library had no business writing about war, politics or geography.

And Diodorus of Agyrium, writing in the first century BC, used both. Almost every fact in the six modules preceding this one — the guard of six hundred and the thousand actually enrolled; the wall across Ortygia and the one-ship gate; the hundred and forty thousand shields; the catapult; the ten thousand mercenaries Gelon enfranchised and the seven thousand who revolted; the general re-allotment of the 460s; the assembly that spared Ducetius; petalism; the Festival of Liberation and its four hundred and fifty bulls; Timoleon's forty thousand settlers — reaches this study through a Sicilian compiler working three to four centuries after the events, drawing on a courtier of the tyranny and an exile who loathed it, and adding his own habits, among them a fondness for his home town and a moralising idiom in which reckless popular speakers are reliably opposed by the most respectable of the elders.

That is the pipe. It should be stated once, plainly, and then worked with, because the alternative to working with it is writing nothing.

What the pipe lets through, and what it does not

The distortion is not principally fabrication. Philistus was a serious historian by the standards of any age, and Timaeus's chronology was good enough that the Greek world adopted it. The distortion is *selection*, and it runs in a specific direction.

Both men wrote from exile. So did Thucydides, whose account of 415–413 is the finest thing in the Syracusan record. Dion recruited his invasion force from exiles. Philoxenus wrote the *Cyclops* after the quarries and sent his refusal from Taras. **Syracuse could banish but could not reach beyond its own borders — Module 5 established that the door stood permanently open — and the consequence is that every man it silenced went somewhere else and wrote.**

That produces a specific and generalisable shape. **A regime that can expel but cannot pursue converts its critics into authors, and the authors outlive it.** The record of such an order is composed disproportionately by the people it expelled, which means the archive is made of grievances — not false ones, necessarily, but selected ones. An exile has excellent information about what a regime did to people and poor information about what it was trying to do; he knows the purges in detail and the administration hardly at all. Read the six preceding modules back with that in mind and the shape is visible: this study can describe six confiscations, four coups, a purge and a mass deportation in circumstantial detail, and cannot say what the ordinary

annual revenue of Syracuse was under any regime, how the grain tithe was actually collected before Hieron II, or what a magistrate did on an ordinary morning.

Set that beside the modern colonial cases in this collection and the contrast is exact and instructive. There, the metropole controls the press at both ends: the despatch is written by the man who governs, filed in an archive he maintains, and read by a public that has no independent access to the colony. The seam is split by distance, and the labour of the order is to keep the two ends from meeting. At Syracuse there is no distance and no metropole, and the man in power controls only what is said inside his own walls. **Where the ruler owns the archive, the record over-represents the administration; where the ruler can only own the room, the record over-represents the opposition.** Both are systematic and neither is a lie, and a comparative project has to correct for the direction each way.

And there is the further distortion, the one identified at the top of this module. The comparison against which Syracuse looks silent is Athens, and Athens published itself on stone to an extent no other Greek city approached. **The best-documented Greek polity is the one whose documentation habit was least typical, which means the standard picture of how a Greek city worked is drawn from an outlier.** That is a caution for the whole collection wherever it uses Athens as a baseline, including where this study has done so.

What cannot be recovered

An honest module of this kind has to name its silences rather than write around them.

There is no Syracusan farmer in this record. Nobody asked one anything, and nothing he said was written down. There is no woman's voice at all, except at one remove — the women whose ornaments Demeter was said to have requested, the *potagogides* sent to listen at dinners, the queen Philistis on a coin and on a theatre seat. There is no slave's voice. There is no Sicel voice of any kind: fewer than thirty inscriptions in a language nobody can fully read, and one man's career reported by his enemies.

The single utterance in this entire study that comes from the position of the powerless and survives verbatim is a joke — *take me away to the quarries* — and it was made by a celebrated court poet who had friends able to intercede for him, and it survives because Greeks found it funny enough to make a proverb of. That is what the bottom of the Syracusan record looks like: one line, from a man who was not really at the bottom, preserved for its wit.

Everything this study has said about what an ordinary Syracusan thought is inference from what he did — that he handed the city to Gelon, that he voted the guard, that he took the land, that he left when leaving was better. The inferences are, I think, sound. They are inferences.

Reading Syracusan information against the framework

The first finding concerns what an oral order does to the past. Where nothing is inscribed, there is no durable public record against which a claim about yesterday can be checked, and the consequence is not merely that citizens are ignorant. It is that **the man who controls the assembly's floor controls the past as well as the present, and the two are the same act.** Dionysius deposed a board of generals with an unfalsifiable accusation about bribery, because a bribe is precisely the kind of fact an oral polity cannot check; and Module 4 found the art of arguing from probability being invented in the same city because titles could not be checked either. Persuasion becomes the master skill in a society that has no records, and it becomes so for the same reason in the courts and in the assembly.

The second finding is the module's contribution and it is about the shape of what survives. A regime that can banish but cannot pursue turns its enemies into writers. Philistus wrote his history in exile at Adria; Timaeus wrote his in exile at Athens; Philoxenus wrote his satire after the quarries and sent his refusal from Italy; Thucydides wrote the best Syracusan narrative we have while exiled from Athens. **Where exit is open, suppression does not suppress — it relocates, and the relocated version is the one that survives, because the regime's own account dies with the regime.** The generalisation for the collection is that the archive of any order which used exile as its standard penalty will be composed disproportionately by the expelled, and will therefore be rich in atrocities and thin in administration. That is not a reason to disbelieve it. It is a reason to know which questions it can answer.

The third finding inverts the colonial pattern and identifies why. The framework's colonial prediction is a seam split in two by distance, with the order's core labour being to keep the metropole's picture and the colony's reality from meeting; the despatch, the blue book and the censored newspaper are the instruments. Syracuse has none of that, because there is no metropole and no distance, and what it has instead is a ruler who can control a room and nothing beyond it. **The scope of an order's information control is set by the scope of its enforcement, and where enforcement stops at the city wall, so does the story.** Dionysius could put Philoxenus in a quarry; he could not stop the *Cyclops* being performed in Athens, and within a few years

Aristophanes was parodying it in front of an Athenian audience while the tyrant's own verses were being laughed at at Olympia.

A fourth finding, smaller but exact, on the limits of a rule. The Syracusan assembly's instrument for policing dangerous speech was a fine, and a rich man paid it and undertook to keep paying it. **A penalty denominated in money binds only those for whom the money is a constraint, and a rule that can be bought out has, for the person who can buy it, no existence.** That is a general proposition and it does not require a tyranny to operate; it is worth carrying to every case in this collection where the record shows a legal restraint expressed as a sum.

And the module's own reflexive finding, which should be applied to the six modules before it. This study's evidence base is a suppression artifact. It comes through a courtier and an exile, compiled by a provincial three centuries later, against a comparative baseline supplied by the one Greek city that published itself on stone. The correct response is not scepticism, which would produce nothing, but locating each claim on the pipe: figures from Diodorus are Diodorus's; hostility to tyrants in the narrative is Timaeus's before it is anybody's; competence attributed to the Dionysian machine is quite possibly Philistus's; and Athens is not the normal case against which Syracuse is abnormal. Where this study has stated a number, it has said whose number it is, and this is the reason.

The module that follows is the open problem — elite coordination and the default — and it will have to be argued largely from behaviour rather than testimony, because on the question of what the men around a Syracusan ruler actually believed they were doing, the record consists of one of them writing an apologia and another writing an indictment.

A note on sources. The epigraphic contrast rests on the standard specialist position that Athens inscribed public documents on a scale no other Greek community approached, with roughly twenty thousand Attic inscriptions surviving from antiquity; the recent literature on the Athenian epigraphic habit and its imitation within the empire is paraphrased and credited. The near-absence of inscribed Syracusan decrees is stated as the ordinary Greek pattern rather than as evidence of concealment, and the argument in the text turns on its consequence for the citizen, not on its cause. Dionysius's accusation against the generals, his election, the muster at Leontini and the vote of the guard are Diodorus 13.91–96. Philistus's payment of the fines is reported in the tradition deriving from Diodorus 13.91 and is single-source. The Philoxenus episode is Diodorus 15.6.2–5, with the proverb and the papyrus of repeated *omicrons* from the Byzantine lexicographic tradition (Suda alpha 2862, epsiloniota 291, phi 397, consulted in the Suda On Line edition; the Greek headword is quoted and the

rendering is mine); Athenaeus 1.6F gives a different and possibly truer cause, the seduction of Dionysius's mistress, and the divergence is reported rather than resolved. The *Cyclops* is securely dated before 388 by Aristophanes' parody at *Plutus* 290–301. For Philistus: birth c. 432, command of the citadel, the marriage to Leptines' daughter and the exile of 386, the composition of the *Sikelika* at Adria, the recall, the dismissal of Plato and Dion, and his death in 356 are drawn from Diodorus 13–16 and Plutarch's *Dion*; Cicero's *pusillus Thucydides* is at *ad Q. Fr.* 2.13. For Timaeus: his father Andromachus's refoundation of Tauromenium in 358 with the survivors of Naxos, the exile under Agathocles around 315 (some scholars propose 312 or earlier), the fifty years in Athens, the thirty-eight books and the nickname *Epitimaios*; whether he ever returned to Sicily is disputed, with Baron doubting it and Champion allowing a return under Hieron II. Polybius's attack occupies most of Book 12 and is itself polemical: Polybius began his own history where Timaeus left off and had a professional interest in discrediting him, so his charge that Timaeus was a library historian without practical experience should be weighed as a competitor's. Plutarch's report that Timaeus attacked Philistus as vulgar and amateurish is in the *Life of Nicias*. Both Philistus and Timaeus survive only in fragments; the fragment collections are Müller's *FHG* and Jacoby's *FGrH* 556 and 566. Diodorus's dependence on both, and the difficulty of telling which is speaking at any given point, is the central and unresolved problem of Sicilian source criticism, and nothing in this module should be taken as resolving it. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited: Christopher A. Baron and Craige B. Champion on Timaeus; Kenneth Sacks and Catherine Rubincam on Diodorus's working methods and numbers; and the recent literature on Greek epigraphic cultures.

Module 8 · WHY SHOULD I BE LINKED WITH HER?

Module 8: elite coordination and the default — why the men with standing and means never came to defend the Syracusan arrangement by defending themselves, and what a hierarchy needs in it before that can happen

The observation, and the case that fails it

The default is not a theory about motives. It is an observation about which hierarchies lasted.

The ones that endured were arranged so that a man defending his own position was, in the same motion and without intending it, defending the whole structure. The emir keeps his emirate, so he keeps the Residency that guarantees it. The chief keeps his eight square miles, so he keeps the register the miles are written in. The bishop keeps his see, so he keeps the church that appoints to it. None of these men needs to approve of the arrangement, believe in its justice, or like the other men inside it. They need only to prefer their own position to the disorder that would follow its collapse — and because that preference is universal among them, the structure is held up from a hundred directions at once by people who never coordinated and would not have chosen each other. That is what makes such arrangements cheap, and it is why they survive rulers, dynasties and sometimes conquests.

Fracture, on the same observation, comes from a specific place: a group with standing and means whose position stops paying. Not the poor, who were priced in the previous modules and who rarely have the coordination to matter; the layer above them — administrators, officers, priests, landholders, the men through whom rule actually runs — when their share of the arrangement no longer exceeds what they could get by breaking it.

Syracuse is the case where the mechanism never engaged.

In five hundred years this city produced no hierarchy that outlasted the man at its head, with the single partial exception examined at the end of this module. Six comprehensive redistributions of land, four floors of force built from nothing, no constitution surviving two consecutive generations, and a final collapse in which the ruling family's own guardians killed each other and the citizens killed the family. The question this module has to answer is not why particular tyrants fell — men fall for a

hundred reasons — but why, across regimes of every constitutional description, the men with standing and means never accumulated positions worth defending as *positions*.

The answer, on the evidence, is not that they were unusually treacherous. It is that they were never given anything that could be defended except access to a person, and that the rulers could not have given them anything else without arming their own replacements.

What a hierarchy needs in it

Set out first what was missing, because the inventory is where the argument starts.

There was no title. Module 2 established this and it is the foundation of everything here. No register, no cadastre, no deed, no court of title. When Dionysius gave the best of the Syracusan land to his friends and senior officers and the houses on Ortygia to his friends and his mercenaries, he gave them possession and nothing else. There was no document, no third party, and no procedure standing between the grant and the giver. A friend of Dionysius held his estate because Dionysius said so, which means that defending his estate and defending Dionysius personally were the same act — and, critically, that the act had no residue. When Dionysius was gone, the estate's warrant was gone with him, and the holder's rational move was to find whoever would issue a new one.

There was no corporate body. This is the more interesting absence and it has not yet been named in this study. Look at the hierarchies in this collection that held: each contains at least one institution that outlives its members and owns things in its own name. The Church holds land as the Church, not as the bishop. The Venetian Great Council holds the constitution as a body, and its membership is written in a book. The emirate exists as an office with a succession, so that the man who holds it is temporary and the thing he holds is not. A corporate person can inherit, can litigate, can be a party to an arrangement across a generation — and its members defend the arrangement because the arrangement is what makes their body a body.

Syracuse had nothing of the kind, and the nearest candidates all fail on inspection. The great cult of the chthonic goddesses was not an independent priestly estate: the Deinomenids held the hierophancy *themselves*, by inheritance, so that religious authority was a family asset rather than a separate corporation with its own interest. There was no continuous council with property, archives and a succession of its own — the oligarchic Six Hundred that Agathocles destroyed appear in the record as a body of men rather than as an institution with a life, and after 317 they do not reappear. The Laws of Diocles were revered but they governed conduct, not incorporation. The army

was a payroll. **A hierarchy composed entirely of natural persons has nothing in it that can inherit, and therefore nothing that can defend the arrangement across a succession.**

And there was no guarantor. In the colonial cases the governor's own position is secured by a metropole he did not create and cannot lose by local misfortune. That is what allows him to let his subordinate elite interlock — to encourage emirs to marry each other's daughters, to let chiefs sit on the same councils, to build a native administration with its own esprit — because their coordination threatens him not at all. Their cohesion is precisely what makes his rule cheap; he *wants* the default. A Syracusan ruler had no such backing. His position rested on the men immediately around him and on nothing else.

That last absence turns out to be the hinge of the whole module.

The devices, and what each of them produced

What a Syracusan ruler had available for binding his elite was a short list, and the record lets us follow each item to its outcome.

Land and houses. Dionysius took the best of the territory and distributed it to his *philoi* and his ranking officers, and gave them the dwellings on Ortygia, inside the wall, alongside the mercenaries. This is the classic move and in most cases it works: the recipient now has something to lose. Here it produced a class of men whose holdings had no source but the giver, quartered together in a fortress, with the fleet locked behind a gate they controlled.

Marriage. The Deinomenids built a genuine interlocking arrangement with the ruling house of Acragas — Gelon married Demarete, daughter of Theron; Hieron married a niece of Theron; Theron's son married a daughter of Polyzalus; and after Gelon's death Polyzalus married Demarete. For about fifteen years that web held two powerful families together and produced the victory at Himera. It broke when Hieron came to suspect Polyzalus, and the tradition that the title *lord of Gela* was chiselled off Polyzalus's dedication at Delphi belongs somewhere in that quarrel.

Dionysius went further and married two women on the same day: Aristomache, daughter of the leading Syracusan Hipparinus, and Doris of Locri, an alliance across the strait. He had earlier married a daughter of Hermocrates. Later he married his daughters to his brother and his nephew. The design is unmistakable — a family knitted to the leading houses of Syracuse and to a foreign power at once.

Command. Philistus, the richest of his early backers, was given the citadel. His brother Leptines was given the fleet. His brother Thearides led the embassy to

Olympia. Commands went to relatives and to men bound by money, which is what a ruler does when there is no office to appoint to — only a person to trust.

Enfranchisement. Gelon made more than ten thousand foreign soldiers into Syracusan citizens; Dionysius made freed slaves into New Citizens. Both were attempts to manufacture a constituency with a stake.

Now follow each to its end.

Philistus, bound by money and by the citadel, was the man who financed Dionysius into power and later commanded the fleet that fought to keep his son there. Dion, bound by marriage — brother of Aristomache, uncle by marriage to the younger Dionysius, the man closest to the throne — is the man who came back from exile with mercenaries in 357 and destroyed the tyranny. Leptines, the brother who held the fleet, was exiled and eventually killed. Apollocrates, the son, held Ortygia against the liberators for two years after his father had fled. The ten thousand enfranchised mercenaries became, within twenty years, the seven thousand who seized Achradina and Ortygia against the democracy that had inherited them.

This is not a run of bad luck across four centuries and several unrelated regimes. It is the mechanism.

Where the only currency for binding an elite is access to the ruler's person, the reward for loyalty is proximity — and proximity is also the precondition for a successful strike. In a hierarchy with instruments, a man is rewarded with an office, a title, a registered holding, a seat on a body; all of these can be held at a distance, and a provincial governor with a patent is bound to the arrangement without ever being within reach of the throne. At Syracuse there was nothing to give but nearness: the estate next to the ruler's, the house inside his wall, his brother's daughter, his citadel, his fleet. Every act of binding pulled a capable and ambitious man one step closer to the only position that mattered, and left him holding the instruments with which it could be taken. The men who overthrew Syracusan regimes were, with striking consistency, the men those regimes had most conspicuously favoured.

The offence of marrying without permission

The clearest single window into why the arrangement could not be allowed to form is the exile of Philistus in 386, and it is usually reported as a piece of tyrannical caprice.

Philistus married the daughter of Leptines, Dionysius's brother. He did not consult the tyrant. Dionysius banished them both.

Ask what the offence actually was. Philistus had not conspired, had not failed, had not defected. He had made a durable, sanctified, heritable bond with another member of the ruler's own inner circle — the man who commanded the fleet — without the

ruler's authorisation. That is not disloyalty. It is *lateral coordination among the elite*, which is the precise substance of a default.

And Dionysius correctly identified it as a threat, because in his position it was one. Module 5 established, from Aristotle's catalogue drawn from Syracusan examples, that the instrument a ruler here reached for first was the capacity of the ruled to know and trust one another — clubs forbidden, common meals forbidden, meetings for discussion forbidden, quarrels sown between friends, between the people and the notables, and among the rich. That module read the programme as directed downward, at the ordinary citizen. The exile of Philistus shows the same programme directed *upward*, at the ruler's own supporters, and there it produces the module's central finding:

The same arrangement that would have made the Syracusan elite defend the order would have made them capable of replacing its occupant, and a ruler whose position rested on nothing but himself could not tell the two apart — because they were not two things.

A default is a network of men whose positions interlock. Interlocking positions mean the men can act together. Where the ruler's own place is guaranteed by something outside the network — a metropole, a register, a law of succession, an anointing church — their acting together is harmless to him and useful, and he encourages it. Where his place is guaranteed by nothing but his own grip, their acting together is the only thing that can remove him, and he must prevent it. So he keeps them atomised; each holds his position from the ruler alone; and none of them has anything to defend when the ruler falls.

The absence of the instrument is therefore self-reinforcing. No register means the elite hold from the ruler personally; holding personally means their coordination is dangerous; their coordination being dangerous means it must be suppressed; suppression means no interlocking positions ever form; and no interlocking positions means no register or council or corporate body ever gets built, because the only people who could build one are the people forbidden to combine. Syracuse ran that loop for three hundred years, under tyrannies and democracies alike, and every regime started from the same place because every regime had destroyed the material from which a successor arrangement might have been made.

Where the fracture came from

Read the record for the author's criterion — a group with standing and means whose position stops paying — and the Syracusan fractures line up with unusual clarity.

The gamoroi, c. 485. The landed aristocracy, expelled from the city by the common people and their own dependants acting together. Their standing was real and their means were real, and they had no force that was not themselves. They solved the problem by hiring one, and thereby ceased permanently to be the group whose position mattered: they returned to their estates and never again appear as the class that decides anything at Syracuse. This is the founding fracture, and it establishes the pattern in which the beneficiary of a rescue is not the group rescued.

The enfranchised mercenaries, 466–461. This is the textbook case. More than ten thousand men had been made Syracusan citizens by Gelon; over seven thousand were still in the city when Thrasybulus fell. The restored democracy reserved the magistracies for the original citizens — Diodorus records both justifications current at the time, that they were judged unworthy, or that men raised under a tyranny and used to serving a monarch in war were suspected of intending revolution — and then adds the flat sentence that they revolted, as one body, and seized Achradina and Ortygia. Here is a group with standing (citizenship), means (arms and land) and no share in the thing that standing was supposed to buy. The democracy identified them as a risk and dealt with the risk by removing their benefit, which converted a latent danger into an actual war.

The propertied, 454. Petalism produced the quietest and least-studied fracture mode in the case. A law under which the most prominent citizen was exiled every time the vote was held made prominence itself hazardous, and Diodorus records what the men of substance did: they withdrew from public affairs and attended to their private business. They did not revolt. They stopped participating. Leadership passed to men with nothing to lose, disorder increased, and the law was repealed.

That deserves naming as a distinct mode. **A group with standing and means that stops benefiting need not attack the arrangement; it can simply stop showing up, and the arrangement hollows out with nobody having done anything to it.** Fracture by abstention leaves no battle in the record and is therefore easy to miss, but its consequence at Syracuse was immediate and the city could see it well enough to reverse the law.

The cavalry, 405–404. The one attempt by the old propertied class to stop Dionysius, and it is worth the detail because of how fast it was over. After the retreat from Gela, the Syracusan horsemen — the *hippeis*, which is to say the men rich enough to keep horses, the same stratum that had produced Olympic chariot teams — rode ahead to the city, plundered Dionysius's house and assaulted his wife, the daughter of Hermocrates, who in the tradition killed herself. Dionysius guessed what had happened, picked the most trustworthy of his men, and covered four hundred stades to

arrive at the gates of Achradina about the middle of the night with a hundred cavalry and six hundred infantry. The gate was shut against him. He burned it down with reeds from the marsh, and by morning the thing was finished.

After 404 the Syracusan cavalry never appears again as a political force. The stratum that in an ordinary Greek city would have supplied the enduring elite — landed, armed, self-financing, intermarried — made one attempt in a single night and was extinguished as a political body inside a week.

Philistus and Leptines, 386. Discussed above: fracture pre-empted by the destruction of a bond before it could become a coalition.

Dion, 357. The most instructive of all, because it is a fracture inside the family. Dion held the greatest private fortune in Syracuse, was brother-in-law to the elder tyrant and uncle by marriage to the younger, and was the regime's most important servant. When Dionysius II exiled him and then confiscated his estates and income — which is to say, when his position stopped paying — he raised a small force among the Syracusan exiles in the Peloponnese and took the city. Every element of the author's criterion is present, and the man who satisfied it was the one the arrangement had rewarded most.

The Six Hundred, 317. Agathocles, acclaimed general with absolute powers on a public oath not to make himself tyrant, turned his soldiers on the propertied opposition and destroyed the oligarchic council. The figures range from six hundred to ten thousand killed and exiled. Whatever the number, the last body in Syracuse that had any claim to be a corporate elite ceased to exist, and no successor body was ever constituted.

The one man who tried to build it

Hieron II is the exception and the module has to give him his due, because he came closer than anyone and the manner of his failure is the strongest evidence for the argument.

He did four things no other Syracusan ruler did. He built a revenue *rule* — the tithe assessed by written contract between grower and collector, with a named procedure and a court for disputes — which gave both parties a position defined by something other than his favour, and which was good enough that a foreign conqueror kept it, and kept its name. He married his daughters to leading Syracusans, Damarata to Adranodorus and Heraclea to Zoippus, building the standard web. He made his son Gelon co-ruler, which is an attempt at a succession rather than a personal grip. And when Gelon predeceased him and the heir was a boy of fifteen, he wrote a will naming

fifteen guardians and, on Livy's account, begged them from his deathbed to keep inviolate the loyalty to Rome that he had maintained for fifty years.

Fifty-four years of stability followed his accession, the longest stretch in Syracusan history and the only one in which the sources record no purge. He came nearer to a default than anybody.

And it lasted thirteen months after his death.

Hieronymus was assassinated. Adranodorus, his guardian and Hieron's son-in-law, first held Ortygia and then — in the module's single most eloquent scene — came before the assembly and laid the keys of the city gates and of the royal treasury at their feet. He was elected praetor, alongside, Livy notes, mostly the tyrant's own assassins. Then he plotted to take the citadel and was killed for it. Then the killing turned on the family: Damarata was murdered; Heraclea and her two daughters were hunted to a chapel in her own house; Harmonia, Gelon's daughter, watched a slave girl dressed in her clothes killed in her place, revealed herself over the body, and was killed too.

And it was Heraclea, on Livy's rendering, who asked the question this module is named for. What had she gained from the reign, she pleaded, but her husband's exile? While the tyrant lived she had never held her sister's position; now he was dead, *why should I be linked with her?* Had Adranodorus succeeded, her sister would have sat on the throne beside him and she, with everyone else, would have been her slave.

The speech is Livy's composition and should be read as such — a Roman historian two centuries later, working from Greek sources, giving a woman words appropriate to her situation. But the *logic* he gives her is the logic of this module stated by someone about to die of it. She is arguing that she was not inside the arrangement: that she held no position in it, drew no benefit from it, and would have been a subordinate had it survived. It is exactly the right defence, and it was true, and it did not save her — because Syracuse had no way of establishing who was inside an arrangement and who was not. There was no register of offices, no list of officeholders, no document anywhere that could have shown what Heraclea did or did not hold. The question of membership was settled the only way it could be settled in that city, which was by a crowd deciding.

Then Hippocrates and Epicydes, agents of Carthage and grandsons of a Syracusan exile, forced their way into the city, killed most of the generals, frightened the assembly into electing them sole commanders, and delivered Syracuse to a war with Rome that ended in Marcellus's sack. **The elite destroyed itself over thirteen months, and foreigners walked into the vacancy.**

Reading the Syracusan default against the framework

The first finding is the self-reinforcing loop, and it is the module's contribution. The default requires that the men with standing hold positions which interlock — that is what makes each of them defend the whole by defending his own. But interlocking positions mean those men can act in concert. Where the ruler's own place is guaranteed by something outside their network, their concert costs him nothing and buys him everything, and he builds it deliberately. Where his place rests on nothing but his personal grip, their concert is the only mechanism that can remove him, and he must break it — which is what Dionysius did when he exiled his most valuable servant for a marriage.

So: **a ruler who lacks an external guarantee of his own position must suppress the elite coordination that would otherwise produce a default, and the suppression prevents the construction of the very instruments that would have supplied the guarantee.** The absence reproduces itself. Syracuse ran that loop under tyrannies, oligarchies and democracies for three centuries, and each regime inherited from its predecessor a stratum with no positions that could survive a change of ruler — which is to say, a stratum with no reason not to change rulers.

This is the answer to the open problem the seed for this study left standing. The Syracusan cycle is not driven by the failure of personal followings to descend, nor by the Carthaginian rivalry, nor by the character of Sicilians. It is driven by an elite that could never be allowed to become one.

The second finding concerns what a hierarchy must contain. Every enduring arrangement in this collection has in it at least one *corporate person* — a body that outlives its members, holds property in its own name, and has a succession: a church, a council with a register of families, a chartered emirate, a senate. Such a body can be a party to an arrangement across generations, and its members defend the arrangement because the arrangement is what constitutes their body. **A hierarchy composed entirely of natural persons has nothing in it that can inherit, and therefore nothing that can defend the order across a succession.** Syracuse had none: the great priesthood was a family possession, the oligarchic Six Hundred were men rather than an institution and were massacred as men, the army was a payroll, and Hieron's council of fifteen existed because it was named in a will — which is to say it was a personal instrument wearing an institutional shape, and it dissolved into a knife-fight the moment the testator was in the ground.

The third finding names a fracture mode the framework has not separated out. Petalism produced no revolt. It produced withdrawal: the men of substance stopped standing for office and went home to their estates. **A group with standing and means**

whose position stops paying need not attack the arrangement — it can simply cease to participate, and the arrangement hollows with nobody having struck it. Fracture by abstention leaves no battle in the record, is invisible to a study looking for coups, and can be lethal on a longer timescale. The Syracusans could see it happening and repealed the law, which is itself evidence of how fast it worked.

The fourth finding is about the currency of reward, and it generalises. Where the only thing a ruler can give is access to himself, the reward for loyalty is proximity, and proximity is the precondition for a strike. Philistus was given the citadel and made a tyrant; Leptines was given the fleet and was exiled and killed; Dion was given a marriage and destroyed the dynasty; Adranodorus was given a daughter and a guardianship and seized Ortygia; Apollocrates was given the citadel and held it against the liberation. **An instrument-based hierarchy can reward a man at a distance — with a patent, a title, a registered holding, a seat — and a personal hierarchy cannot, so it is compelled to place its most capable and ambitious servants within reach of the only thing worth taking.**

And the guard rail, which this module needs as much as any. None of this makes the Syracusan elite worse men than the emirs, bishops and councillors whose arrangements held. Dion was, by every account including hostile ones, a serious man with a real conception of good government; Philistus served forty years and died fighting for the house he had made; Adranodorus laid the keys of the treasury at the assembly's feet before he plotted for it. They were behaving exactly as men behave when their positions have no source but a person: rationally, on a ledger, and without the option of defending an arrangement, because there was no arrangement to defend. **The default is not a moral property of an elite. It is a property of what they have been given to hold.**

The module that follows takes up plurality and foreclosure — whether anything in this case was ever available to be argued over, and what happened to the Syracusan assembly across five centuries of being the body that voted men their bodyguards. It is the other half of the open problem, and Heraclea's question will be asked there in a different form: not who was inside the arrangement, but whether there was ever more than one arrangement on offer.

A note on sources. Diodorus 14.7.4–5 supplies the distribution of the best land to Dionysius's friends and senior officers and of the Ortygia dwellings to friends and mercenaries; 13.112–113 the ride of the Syracusan cavalry, the plundering of Dionysius's house, the assault on Hermocrates' daughter, the four hundred stades, the hundred cavalry and six hundred infantry, and the burning of the Achradina gate with marsh reeds; 11.72.3–73 the ten thousand enfranchised mercenaries, the seven

thousand remaining, the exclusion from the magistracies with both contemporary justifications, and the seizure of Achradina and Ortygia; 11.86–87 petalism and the withdrawal of the propertied; 16 and Plutarch's *Dion* the confiscation of Dion's estates and his return in 357. All of this reaches us through the pipe described in Module 7 and the figures are Diodorus's. Philistus's exile in 386 for marrying Leptines' daughter is in the tradition deriving from Diodorus 15.7 and Plutarch's *Dion*; the reasoning attributed to Dionysius — fear of an alliance between Leptines and Philistus — is the ancient explanation and is adopted here because it is the only one offered and because it fits the surrounding behaviour, but it is an inference of the sources and not a statement by any participant. The Deinomenid–Emmenid marriage web is assembled from Herodotus 7.165–166, Diodorus 11, and the Pindaric scholia, and its details are not all secure; the erasure on the Polyzalus base at Delphi is described in Module 3 and its occasion remains disputed. Dionysius's double marriage on one day is Plutarch, *Dion* 3, and Diodorus 14.44–45. Hieron II's arrangements and the collapse of 215–214 rest almost entirely on Livy 24.4–7 and 21–26, supplemented by Polybius 7.2–8; Livy is a Roman writing some two centuries later, working from Greek sources including Polybius, with a settled interest in presenting Syracusan politics as volatile and Roman intervention as restoring order, and his speeches are compositions in the ancient manner. Heraclea's plea is quoted from Livy's text and is used explicitly as Livy's rendering of the logic of the situation rather than as her words; the same caution applies to the reported defence of Sopater that the conspiracy was driven by the ambitions of the royal women, which is both a topos and a convenient exculpation. The killing of Damarata, Heraclea, her daughters and Harmonia is in Livy 24.24–26, with a variant on Harmonia in Valerius Maximus 3.2 ext. 9. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited: Brian Caven on Dionysius I; R. J. A. Talbert on Timoleon and on Syracusan institutions; Eric W. Robinson on Syracusan democracy; D. Alex Walthall on the Hieronian administration; and the recent literature on Livy's treatment of mass and elite at Syracuse in 214. Where this module reasons from an absence — the lack of a Syracusan register, corporate council, independent priesthood or law of succession — the absence is an absence in the surviving record, which Module 7 has already shown to be composed by exiles and compilers; the argument is offered as the best available reading and not as proof that no such institution ever existed.

Module 9 · ARMED INTO THE PLACE OF ASSEMBLY

Module 9: plurality or foreclosure — what protections a Syracusan actually had against the apparatus, which factional fights produced them, and why a city with five hundred years of continuous popular assembly accumulated so little residue

The fact this module has to explain

Syracuse had a popular assembly that met, deliberated and decided, without interruption, for something over five centuries.

It condemned the Athenian generals in 413 and sent seven thousand men to the quarries. It voted a colossal statue to Zeus the Liberator in 466 and instituted an annual festival of freedom. It debated whether to kill a suppliant Sicel king in 450 and decided not to. It invented petalism in 454 and repealed it within a few years. It deposed a board of generals in 406 on an unproven accusation. It voted Dionysius a bodyguard of six hundred men of his own selection in 405. It acclaimed Agathocles general with absolute powers in 317 on his public oath not to make himself tyrant. It received the keys of the citadel and the royal treasury from Adranodorus in 214 and elected him praetor alongside the men who had murdered his king.

That body was not a facade. It made real decisions with real consequences, and its assent was worth having to every ruler in this study — which is why every ruler in this study went to the trouble of obtaining it. And in five hundred years of continuous operation it accumulated almost no permanent protections for the people who sat in it, and voted itself out of business four separate times.

So the question this module asks is not whether Syracusans had liberties in the abstract. It is: what could a Syracusan actually invoke against the apparatus; who won it, in which fight, bargaining from what position; and what made any of it more than words.

The inventory

What existed.

The assembly itself, with the powers listed above: it elected and deposed generals, tried capital cases, voted constitutions and voted them away. Attendance was open to citizens, and the definition of a citizen was, as Module 2 showed, unusually elastic.

The Laws of Diocles, from 412: a constitutional change appointing magistrates by lot, a board of lawgivers elected by the people to draft a code, and a body of penal and procedural law severe enough to be famous for it. One of its provisions forbade the bearing of weapons in the place of assembly on pain of death. Other Sicilian cities adopted the code, and on Diodorus's account they went on using it until the Sicilian Greeks received Roman citizenship — something over three hundred and fifty years. Later legislators who revised it at Syracuse, Cephalus under Timoleon and Polydorus under Hieron II, were not permitted the title of lawgiver and were called *interpreters of the lawgiver* instead.

Suppliancy at the altars, which was not a Syracusan institution but a pan-Hellenic one, and which worked: Ducetius staked his life on it and the assembly, having debated whether to kill him, bound itself and let him go.

Access to the courts, most explicitly under Timoleon, who put law courts on the ground where the tyrants' citadel had stood and who, when taken to court himself on charges Plutarch calls spurious, refused to be exempted — saying that this was the precise thing he had laboured for, that every Syracusan might appeal to the laws.

The Hieronican procedure, from the third century: a written contract between grower and tithe-collector, with a specified rate and a court in which either could sue the other.

What did not exist.

No protection of property whatever — no register, no title, no remedy against confiscation, as six comprehensive redistributions demonstrate. No protection of speech: the assembly's instrument against dangerous speakers was a fine, which Module 7 showed could be underwritten by a rich patron and thereby annulled. No protection against exile, which was the ordinary fate of the political class and was imposed by vote, by decree, and by petalism without any charge at all. No protection of the person against a ruler who held the citadel. And no body — no council, no corporation, no senate — standing between the individual and either the assembly or the tyrant.

That inventory is worth pausing on for its shape. **The protections Syracuse had were procedural and criminal; the protections it lacked were proprietary and personal.** A Syracusan could expect a fair hearing on a charge of theft under a code that other cities admired. He could not expect to keep his farm.

The fight that produced the code

Now the author's question: who won these, and in which fight?

The Laws of Diocles are the one substantial and durable liberty in the case, and their origin is exactly where the framework says to look — in a factional struggle inside the hierarchy, immediately after a moment when a large group had bargained from a position of real strength.

In 413 Syracuse destroyed the Athenian expedition. The defence had been conducted by elected generals commanding a citizen levy: hoplites on the walls of Epipolae, rowers in the Great Harbour, and the whole adult male population under arms for two years. When it was over, the men who had done it were in a position to demand something, and what they demanded was a constitutional settlement.

The specific content is telling. Magistracies by lot — which removes selection from the men with standing and reputation, and hands it to the whole body. A board of lawgivers *elected by the people* to draft the code. And a weapons ban in the assembly place, which is a protection of the deliberating body against armed intimidation by exactly the class that owns arms.

Read against the political situation, the target is unmistakable. The dominant figure in Syracuse was Hermocrates: aristocratic in orientation, the general whose strategy had saved the city, the man who at the congress of Gela had argued the Sicilian Greeks into composing their quarrels. Diocles was a popular leader, and the reforms he carried were, on the ancient description, aimed at elite overreach. While Hermocrates was away in the Aegean commanding a Syracusan squadron in the Spartan cause, his rivals used the assembly to condemn him in absentia, and around 410 he was exiled.

Then the see-saw. Diocles, sent to relieve Himera in 409, failed, withdrew, and did not stay to bury the Syracusan dead. Hermocrates, back in Sicily with a private force and campaigning against the Carthaginians on his own account, collected the bones of the men who had fallen at Himera and sent them home with full honours. The gesture did its work: the revulsion against Diocles led to *his* banishment in 408. Hermocrates' own sentence, however, was never reversed. He approached the city, was let in by friends with a small band, was discovered before his main force arrived, and was killed in the street with most of his followers.

So: two men, two factions, an exchange of exiles, and both principals destroyed — Diocles into obscurity, Hermocrates in an alley in his own city. And the code both of them had been fighting around outlived them by three and a half centuries and was adopted by cities that had never heard of either.

The residue survived the men because it was the one thing in the fight that neither of them could carry off. An estate can be confiscated by whoever wins. A

magistracy can be filled by whoever wins. A rule specifying that magistracies are filled by lot cannot be pocketed; it is either in force or it is not, and it applies to the winner as much as to the loser. That is what makes it residue.

The size of the claimant, and the form of the payment

Which suggests a mechanism, and I think it is the module's contribution.

Compare the two ways a Syracusan factional victory was cashed.

When a *small* coalition won — Gelon and the returning gamoroi in 485, Dionysius and his thousand armed poor in 405, Agathocles and his soldiers in 317 — the payment took the form of assets. Land to the friends and senior officers. Houses on Ortygia. The estates of the Six Hundred. Citizenship for ten thousand mercenaries. Every one of these is divisible, transferable, and pocketable, and every one of them was taken away again by the next winner.

When a *large* body won — the men who had defended the city in 413, the citizens who threw out Thrasybulus in 466 — the payment took the form of rules and observances. Magistracies by lot. An elected board of lawgivers. A weapons ban. A code. A colossal statue of Zeus the Liberator and an annual festival with four hundred and fifty bulls.

That is not a difference of temperament. It is arithmetic. **A faction of a few hundred can be paid in estates, because there are enough estates to go round. A body of ten thousand cannot, and the only thing that can be distributed to ten thousand men simultaneously without being divided is a rule.** So the form of the payment is set by the size of the claimant, and liberties are what large groups take when they are strong enough to take something and too numerous to be bought off individually.

This is worth carrying beyond Sicily, because it explains a pattern the collection keeps encountering: why the residue of a baronial revolt is a charter rather than a set of manors. Twenty-five barons could have taken manors, and did; but the guarantees they wanted had to be framed generally to be worth anything, because what they were protecting against was a king picking them off one at a time. Generality is not magnanimity. It is the technical requirement of a protection claimed by a group whose members can be isolated.

Why the residue was so thin

Which raises the harder question. Syracuse had constant factional conflict — more of it, and more violent, than most Greek cities — and produced almost no

accumulation. Why did five centuries of fighting leave one code and a handful of observances?

The answer runs through Module 5, and it is the uncomfortable counterweight to that module's most sympathetic finding.

Liberties accrete out of fights that **neither side can win outright.** A charter is what a king signs when he cannot destroy the barons and the barons cannot depose the king; the document is the record of a stalemate, and its clauses are the price of ending one. Where a fight can be won outright, no document is produced, because the winner has no reason to bind himself and the loser has nothing to trade.

At Syracuse almost every fight was winner-take-all, and the reason is the open door. Module 5 established that exit was permanently available and could not be closed — an island crowded with Greek cities, Italy a day's sail, no law against flight ever recorded. The consequence for the ordinary man was protective: extraction could not be pushed to the bone, because a man with legs and a trade could leave.

The consequence for the political class was the opposite. **A faction that loses and can leave does not have to bargain.** It goes to Casmenae, or Messana, or Adria, or the Peloponnese, and waits for a chance to come back with soldiers. And a faction that wins knows the losers will leave, which means it need not offer terms to keep them. The stalemate that produces charters never forms, because the losing side is always removable and always removes itself.

Count the exits. The gamoroi to Casmenae. The seven thousand mercenaries to Messenia, with their movable goods, by treaty — the one negotiated settlement in the case, and its content was an evacuation. The Myletidae to Himera. Hermocrates to the Aegean and back with a private army. Diocles into obscurity. Philistus to Thurii and Adria. Dion to the Peloponnese and back with mercenaries. Timaeus to Athens for fifty years. Philoxenus to Taras. Dionysius II to Locri. There is scarcely a Syracusan factional conflict in five centuries that ends in a compromise inscribed anywhere.

So the finding, stated against the grain of the previous module: **an open door protects the individual and prevents the institution.** Exit is a liberty in itself, and a real one, and it is why nobody in this study was ground down as a Spartan helot or an Andean *mitayo* was. It is also the reason no other liberty accumulated, because a population that can leave never has to be granted anything to make it stay.

What made the code more than words

The Diocles code is the case's one success, and it repays asking what held it up, because the answer is not that it was well drafted.

It created a class of practitioners. Module 4 traced the invention of systematic rhetoric to the property litigation of the 460s, and the code of 412 institutionalised the courtroom the technique was made for. From that point Syracuse contained men whose standing and livelihood came from the operation of the laws — advocates, jurors, magistrates chosen by lot from the whole body. A rule with a profession attached to it has a constituency, and constituencies defend what constitutes them.

It escaped its author's city. Other Sicilian communities adopted it. Once the code was in force at Gela, Camarina, Acragas and elsewhere, no Syracusan faction could abolish it by winning a fight at Syracuse, because it no longer belonged to Syracuse. That is the same mechanism Module 3 identified in the pan-Hellenic peer audience — an external party that has taken an interest is a constraint that local power cannot reach — and it is the reason the code outlasted both Diocles and Hermocrates, four tyrannies and a Roman conquest.

And it acquired a story. Diodorus records that when Diocles died the Syracusans buried him with a hero's honours and built him a temple at public expense. The tradition also preserves an account of the death itself: that Diocles came armed into the place of assembly, having forgotten his own law that made this a capital offence; that when it was pointed out to him he said he would confirm the law; and that he drew the sword and killed himself with it.

The story is almost certainly not true. The same tale is told of Zaleucus of Locri and of Charondas of Catana, and a legend that attaches to three lawgivers in the same region is a literary type rather than an event. But its falsity is beside the point for this module, because **what a society tells itself about its laws is part of what makes the laws work.** The Sicilian Greeks circulated, and evidently liked, a story whose whole content is that the law binds the man who made it, and binds him to the point of death, and that he accepted this without argument. That proposition is the difference between a rule and an instruction. Where it is believed, a magistrate hesitates; where it is not, he does not.

Set beside it the counter-example from the same city, and the pair defines the limit. The assembly's rule against seditious speech was denominated in money, and Philistus paid Dionysius's fines and undertook to keep paying them indefinitely. **A rule that can be bought out does not bind the person who can buy it, and therefore does not bind at all where it matters.** Syracuse had one law about which men told a story of a lawgiver killing himself rather than break it, and another that a rich man converted into a subscription. Both were on the books.

And the third limit, which Module 2 established and which this module has to restate as a general proposition. Timoleon revised the Diocles code, left its provisions

on private contract and inheritance exactly as he found them, and in the same year redistributed the entire territory of Syracuse and sold the houses of the city at auction. The two facts sat together without contradiction because the code governed *dealings in* property and said nothing about *who held* it. **A liberty protects only what it names**, and the prestige of a legal order tells you nothing about the scope of its coverage. A Syracusan in 338 had a genuinely good chance of justice in a dispute over a contract, and no chance at all of keeping his house.

The second durable one

The *lex Hieronica* is the only other Syracusan instrument that outlived its maker by more than a generation, and it survived for the same structural reason rather than a similar one.

It was not won in a factional fight. It was granted from above by a king who had no need to grant it. But its content did something no Syracusan grant had done before: it created two *named parties with standing against each other*. The grower and the tithe-collector each had a defined position under a written contract, a stated rate, and a court in which either could sue. That is not a gift to a class of dependants; it is the construction of a relationship in which both sides have an interest in the procedure continuing, because the procedure is what gives each of them a claim on the other.

And it worked. Rome kept the rate, kept the mechanism, and kept the name — on the reasoning Cicero states plainly, that the Sicilians should not be unsettled by a new law or even a new title for one. A century and a half later, a Roman governor was prosecuted at Rome for breaking it, by an advocate who could count on a Roman jury understanding that Sicilian farmers had a right under a dead Greek king's tax code.

A liberty survives where it constitutes a constituency, and it does so whether it was won or given. The Diocles code created advocates and jurors and escaped to other cities. The Hieronican law created growers and collectors with mutual standing and was adopted by a conqueror. Everything else Syracuse granted — citizenship, land, houses, magistracies — created individual beneficiaries who could be dispossessed one at a time, and every one of them was.

Foreclosure, and the men who were let in

The other half of the module is what closed, and here the pattern from Module 8 recurs.

The Syracusan cavalry, the stratum that in an ordinary Greek city supplies the enduring propertied elite, made one attempt against Dionysius in 405 and was

extinguished as a political body within a week. The Six Hundred, the last body with any claim to be a corporate elite, were destroyed by Agathocles in 317 and never reconstituted. Petalism, the demos's own protection against a rising tyrant, was created in 454 after Tyndarides had raised a personal bodyguard out of the poor, and was repealed within a few years because it drove the men of substance out of public life altogether. Each of these is a foreclosure, and after each of them there was one fewer party capable of bargaining.

Which brings the module to the author's most exacting question: if anyone below the traditional elite gets let in, find the factional fight that let them.

Syracuse looks, at first, like the most inclusive polity in this collection. Ten thousand foreign mercenaries enfranchised by Gelon. Freed slaves made citizens by Dionysius and named *neopolitai*. Sicels receiving allotments from the assembly in 461. Campanians given whole cities. Forty thousand strangers advertised for and seated on the land by Timoleon. A potter's son from that last intake ruling the island within a generation. The boundary of the Syracusan settlement was money and not blood, and it was crossed constantly.

And almost none of it produced residue, because almost none of it was *won*.

Every admission in that list was granted from above by a ruler who needed soldiers, taxpayers or bodies, at a moment of his choosing, on terms he set. None of them was the settlement of a fight in which the admitted party had bargained from strength. And the difference showed the moment the grant became inconvenient. When the restored democracy of 466 reserved the magistracies for the original citizens, the seven thousand surviving enfranchised mercenaries had no instrument to invoke — no charter, no registered status, no procedure, nothing but a status conferred by a dead tyrant. They had exactly one recourse, and they used it: they took Achradina and Ortygia by arms, and the matter was settled by a war and then by their removal to Messenia.

Admission granted is not admission won, and only the second leaves residue. A group let in by a ruler holds its membership on the same terms as a friend of Dionysius held his estate — from a person, revocably, with nothing behind it. A group that fights its way in and settles on terms holds something that has to be repudiated rather than merely discontinued, and repudiation costs more.

Reading Syracusan liberty against the framework

The first finding concerns form. A continuously functioning popular assembly is not, by itself, a liberty. Syracuse had one for five hundred years and it voted in four tyrannies, condemned seven thousand men to a quarry, and elected a king's assassins as magistrates within a week of the murder. The assembly was where power was

contested, which is a real and important thing, but it was not a protection *from* power, because it had no mechanism for binding itself over time. Every session was sovereign and could undo the last. **A body that can decide anything can decide to stop deciding, and an assembly with no entrenched rules is not a defence against autocracy but the ordinary route to it.**

The second finding is the module's mechanism, and it is about the form of payment. Small factions take assets; large bodies must take rules, because a rule is the only thing that can be given to ten thousand people at once without being divided among them. That is why the one substantial Syracusan liberty follows immediately on the one occasion when the whole citizen body had done something indispensable — the defence of 413 — and why every tyranny, installed by a coalition of hundreds, paid its supporters in land and houses instead. **Liberties are what a claimant takes when it is strong enough to take something and too numerous to be bought off individually.** Generality is a technical requirement, not a moral achievement.

The third finding is the hard one, and it turns Module 5's most sympathetic result on its head. Residue accretes from fights neither side can win, because a charter is the written record of a stalemate. At Syracuse the door stood permanently open, and the losing faction always had somewhere to go — which meant it never had to be bought off, and the winner never had to bind himself. Count the settlements: in five hundred years the only negotiated one is the treaty of the 460s, and its substance was an evacuation. **An open door protects the individual and prevents the institution.** Exit is itself a liberty, and Sicily's is the reason nobody here was ground down as helots were; and it is also the reason nothing else accumulated. A population that can leave never has to be granted anything to make it stay. This is a genuine trade-off and neither half of it should be softened.

The fourth finding is about what makes a rule more than words, and the case supplies three conditions, each with its counter-example inside the same city.

A rule needs a constituency that lives by it. The Diocles code created advocates, jurors and lot-chosen magistrates; the Hieronican law created growers and collectors with standing to sue each other. Both survived. Grants of land and citizenship created beneficiaries who could be dispossessed individually, and all of them were.

A rule needs an interested party beyond the ruler's reach. Diocles' code was adopted across Sicily and could no longer be repealed by winning a fight at Syracuse; Hieron's law was retained by Rome. This is the same mechanism as the pan-Hellenic audience in Module 3, and it is the only external constraint this stateless-of-metropole case ever generated.

A rule needs a story in which it binds the man who made it. The Sicilian Greeks told each other that Diocles came armed into the assembly, realised he had broken his own law, and killed himself with the sword — a tale told also of Zaleucus and of Charondas, and therefore certainly a type rather than an event. Its truth is irrelevant; its circulation is the evidence. Against it stands the fine for seditious speech, which a rich man paid on another man's behalf indefinitely. **A rule denominated in money binds only those for whom the money is a constraint; a rule about which people tell a story of its author dying to keep it binds everyone who believes the story.** Syracuse had both on its books at once, and the two together define the range.

And the answer to the module's title question, stated plainly. There was liberty at Syracuse, and it was not merely rhetoric: a suppliant Sicel king walked out of that assembly alive; a code drafted there governed a third of an island for three and a half centuries; a farmer under the Hieronican law could sue the man collecting his tithe and win. But every one of these protected a *procedure* and none of them protected a *holding*, and a man whose farm can be reassigned by decree is not free in any sense that would have been recognised by the people who wrote the charters this collection usually examines. What Syracuse had was the liberty of a citizen in a courtroom and none of the liberty of a subject in his own house — and the reason is the absence this study has been tracking since Module 2, which is that there was never any instrument standing between a man and whoever currently held Ortygia.

The module that follows takes up change and collapse, and it has a question waiting for it that the framework's colonial version cannot answer: what ends an order that has no metropole whose will can empty?

A note on sources. Diodorus 13.34.6–35.3 supplies the constitutional reform of 412, the election of the board of lawgivers, the hero-cult and temple of Diocles, the adoption of the code by other Sicilian cities down to the grant of Roman citizenship, and the refusal of later legislators the title of lawgiver; 13.19.4 and 13.33.1 his proposal on the Athenian prisoners; 13.63 and 13.75 the exile of Hermocrates in absentia, the bones of the Himera dead, the counter-exile of Diocles in 408, and Hermocrates' death forcing an entry into the city; 11.86–87 petalism; 11.92 the assembly's debate over Ducetius; 16.82–83 Timoleon's revision of the code leaving private contract and inheritance untouched. All of this reaches us through the pipe described in Module 7. The weapons ban in the assembly place and the story of Diocles' suicide by his own sword are reported in the tradition deriving from Diodorus; the suicide is told in nearly identical form of Zaleucus of Locri and Charondas of Catana, is therefore a lawgiver-topos rather than an event, and is used here explicitly as evidence of what was believed rather than of what happened. The observation that the citizens who defended

Syracuse in 413 were thereafter in a position to demand constitutional concessions is the standard modern reading of the sequence and is stated as such. Plutarch, *Timoleon* 37, supplies the refusal of exemption from the courts, in Bernadotte Perrin's public-domain Loeb of 1918; Plutarch's *Timoleon* is moral biography at three and a half centuries' distance with a thesis to advance, and the anecdote is uncorroborated. The *lex Hieronica* is known principally from Cicero's *Verrines*, a prosecution speech; its mechanics are not seriously disputed but its Roman-era form may differ from Hieron's original. Livy 24.23 supplies Adranodorus surrendering the keys and his election as praetor alongside the tyrant's assassins, with the cautions on Livy set out in Module 8. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited: Eric W. Robinson on Syracusan democracy and its assemblies; R. J. A. Talbert on Timoleon and Syracusan institutions; Michael Gagarin on early Greek law and the lawgiver traditions; and the specialist literature on Diocles and the Sicilian legal codes. Where this module argues from the absence of negotiated settlements in the Syracusan record, the absence is an absence in sources composed largely by exiles, and the argument is offered as the best available reading rather than as proof that no such settlement was ever made.

Module 10 · THE GATE BESIDE THE FOUNTAIN

Module 10: change and collapse — testing the four cracks against five centuries in which the apex changed hands eight times, and asking what ends an order that has no metropole whose will can empty

The question the colonial template cannot ask here

The framework's account of change is that structural change never comes from the ruled. A durable order is an armed settlement, and an armed settlement is altered only by those who command organised force; a rising against an intact floor meets organised violence and is destroyed, with a regularity approaching a law. Orders change when the floor itself cracks, and it cracks in four ways: the elite fractures and one faction arms the people against the other; it exhausts its floor in great-power war and must pay the survivors; it is conquered by a rival elite; or it overbreeds, seating fewer claimants than it produces, until its surplus turns revolutionary and leads the crowd as fuel. The common man is present at every opening — as soldier, as crowd, as the weight one broken faction swings — and is the author of none of them.

The colonial version of this predicts a fifth thing, particular to conquest states: collapse driven by the metropole's will emptying, when the distant population that funds and mans the conquest stops believing it worth the price. That prediction is unavailable at Syracuse, because there is no metropole, and its unavailability is the reason this module has something to add rather than merely something to confirm.

Syracuse changed its apex, comprehensively, at least eight times in three hundred years: 485, 466, 405, 357, 344, 317, and — after the one long stable reign — 215 and 212. That is a rate of structural change far higher than any case in the framework's own account, and the rate turns out to be the thing that needs explaining.

The eviction that changed nothing

Begin with the episode that looks like a counter-example, because it is the only candidate the case offers and it does not survive inspection.

Around 485 the gamoroi — the landed aristocracy of Syracuse, the men who had held the plain for two and a half centuries — were thrown out of the city by the

common people acting together with the dependent labouring class beneath them. Herodotus's verb is one of expulsion. The aristocracy withdrew to Casmenae and the city was in the hands of the people who had put them out.

It is tempting to file this as the rising that worked, and the temptation should be refused, because everything that makes an event structural change is absent from it.

Nobody was defeated. There is no battle in the record. What the sources describe is an eviction from an urban space, and the men evicted were a small numerical minority attempting to hold a walled city against the whole of its population — a task for which a horse-keeping aristocracy is exactly unsuited, since cavalry is worthless in streets and a class that is its own army cannot be in the countryside and the agora at once. They did the sensible thing and left.

They left for a fortress they already owned, in the middle of their own estates. Casmenae was a Syracusan foundation of the 640s, a walled inland site laid out on some thirty parallel streets, planted on the routes into the interior — a military colony built by Syracuse to hold the *chora*. The gamoroi did not flee into the wilderness. They withdrew from the town to the strong point that commanded the land their wealth actually consisted of, and waited there with their claims intact.

Nothing was redistributed. In an interlude of several years the demos does not appear to have touched the settlement, and could not have: the estates were in the country, and the country was where the gamoroi were sitting. What the risers held was a city.

And the opposition was not what the romantic version requires. The *demos* of an archaic Greek polis is not a peasantry. It contains traders, artisans, sailors, and the whole hoplite stratum below the horsemen — men with arms, some training, and a stake. This was not field hands against knights. It was one armed body of Greeks putting another, smaller and mounted, out of a town it could not hold.

Then Gelon came from Gela with the professional army Hippocrates had built, bringing the exiles with him, and the Syracusan people handed over to him the city and themselves, without a battle. The gamoroi got their estates back. The dependent labourers went back to working them, and the word that named them never appears in a source again.

So the correct reading is the deflating one. **Judged by the only test that matters — did the settlement move? — the answer is no.** The landed class was restored with its property; the labouring class was returned to its position and then vanished from the record entirely; and the single durable consequence was a change at the apex that nobody who rose in 485 had wanted or could have prevented, from the collective rule of a landholding class to the personal rule of a man with a payroll. The interlude did

not overthrow the order. It created a vacancy, which the displaced elite filled by importing a professional army, and the order that came out was harder than the one that went in.

The analogy that fits is the Paris Commune, and it fits closely: a population holding a capital for a season while the intact state waits outside, ending in restoration by regular troops. To call that a successful revolution is to mistake temporary possession of a city for a change in who owns what — which is precisely the substitution this project exists to refuse.

What the episode does establish is narrower and worth keeping. **An elite that is its own floor can be evicted but cannot be dispossessed**, because the thing that makes it an elite is not in the city. It has no instrument for policing a town against its own population, so eviction is cheap for the risers; and it loses nothing structural by being evicted, so restoration is cheap for the elite. That is a fact about archaic aristocracies and their vulnerability to *inconvenience*, not an exception to the law that risings against an armed settlement do not alter it.

Fracture as the standing condition

Now run the rest of the record against the four cracks, and the first thing that appears is that one of them is not a crack here at all. It is the weather.

Every subsequent change of apex at Syracuse is an elite fracture, and every one of them was resolved by a transaction in the same market.

In 466 Thrasybulus was overthrown by a coalition of Syracusan citizens, other Sicilian cities, and — decisively — mercenaries who changed sides. In 405 Dionysius split the board of generals with an unverifiable accusation, was elected in their place, and bought a personal force with the assembly's authorisation. In 357 Dion, the regime's own most-favoured servant, came from exile with hired soldiers and took the city from his nephew. In 344 the Syracusans, exhausted by twelve years of factional war, appealed to Corinth, and Corinth sent Timoleon with a small mercenary force. In 317 Agathocles, twice exiled and returned as a mercenary leader, was acclaimed general with absolute powers and turned his soldiers on the propertied opposition. In 215 the guardians of a boy king killed each other and were killed. In 212 the floor was sold to Rome.

Eight changes, eight fractures, and in every single case the decisive instrument was a body of purchased soldiers changing hands.

This is where the case adds something the framework's own examples do not require it to consider. Skocpol's model — and the framework's use of it — assumes a state whose floor is *normally unified* and cracks only under exceptional strain, usually fiscal-

military pressure from abroad. The rarity of revolution follows from the rarity of that strain. But Syracuse's floor was never unified in the first place, because it was not an institution. It was a market.

Where the floor of force is purchased, it can be repurchased, and elite fracture ceases to be a rare crack and becomes the permanent condition of the order. Any faction with silver could enter the market at any time; every ruler knew it; and the entire apparatus described in Modules 1, 5 and 8 — the walled island, the one-ship gate, the informers, the exile of a man for marrying without permission — is the behaviour of men who understood that the crack was always open and that their only defence was to be the highest bidder and to keep everyone else from bidding.

That explains the *rate*, which is the datum the framework's other cases do not have to account for. An order whose floor is a standing institution changes when something breaks it. An order whose floor is a purchase changes whenever someone can outbid.

Overproduction by import

The fourth crack — an order seating fewer claimants than it produces, with the surplus turning revolutionary and leading the crowd as fuel — is present at Syracuse in a variant form that is worth naming, because the mechanism works identically without the demography the theory usually assumes.

Turchin and Goldstone describe elite overproduction as a consequence of *breeding*: good times, an elite that reproduces faster than the order creates places, a growing pool of educated and ambitious men with no chair to sit in. Syracuse produced its surplus by a different route. It manufactured citizens.

Gelon enfranchised more than ten thousand foreign mercenaries. Dionysius made freed slaves into citizens and named them for the fact. Timoleon advertised in Greece and seated forty thousand strangers on the vacant land. Every one of these operations was undertaken to fill a floor or a tax base, and every one of them produced, within a generation, a body of men formed to expect a place in a city with the same finite number of magistracies as before.

The consequences are exactly what the theory predicts. In 466 the restored democracy reserved the magistracies for the original citizens and excluded Gelon's enfranchised soldiers; more than seven thousand of them were still in the city; they revolted as one body and seized Achradina and Ortygia. A surplus of claimants, denied the places they had been given standing to expect, fought a war about it.

And the counter-elite figure of the whole case is a product of the same machinery. Agathocles' father Carcinus was a potter who came from Rhegium — or Thermae — on Timoleon's resettlement scheme and took up Syracusan citizenship on Timoleon's

terms. The son rose through the army, which is precisely the institution that forms a man into elite aspiration without giving him elite standing; he attached himself to the popular faction against the oligarchy of the Six Hundred; he was exiled twice by the men who held the places; he became a mercenary leader; he came back; and in 317 he destroyed the Six Hundred and took the city. Twenty-six years from immigrant's son to tyrant, and thirteen more to king.

Elite overproduction does not require fertility. It requires a mismatch between the number of men formed to expect a place and the number of places — and a state that manufactures citizens to man its floor manufactures claimants for its offices, on a lag of about one generation. Syracuse ran that machine deliberately and repeatedly for military reasons, and paid for it politically every time.

Exhaustion, in the form this order could take

The second crack — the floor shattered from outside by great-power war, forcing the surviving elite to arm and then pay the common man — appears here in a variant that follows from the purchase.

A conscript floor is exhausted when its men are killed. A purchased floor is exhausted when the money runs out, and the failure mode is different in an important way: an unpaid army does not dissolve, it *changes sides*, or takes a city for itself. The Mamertines — Campanian mercenaries who had served Agathocles — seized Messana from the inside when their employment ended, killed the men and took the women and the property, and sat there as a power for fifty years until they invited in the Romans and started the First Punic War. That is what an exhausted purchased floor does.

Which is why the most sophisticated manoeuvre in this study is Hieron II's, and it should be read in this module as well as in Module 1. Faced with an inherited mercenary force he could not pay off, could not disband without releasing several thousand armed professionals into Sicily, and could not trust, he took them out against the Mamertines, held the citizen levy back under his own command as though intending to attack from another quarter, pushed the mercenaries forward, and let them be cut to pieces while he withdrew in safety with the citizens. Polybius says he thereby purged the army of its turbulent and seditious element. He then hired fresh mercenaries and armed and drilled the urban levy, and reigned fifty-four years.

He performed a managed exhaustion of his own floor — arranging with an enemy the destruction that a war or a bankruptcy would otherwise have inflicted at a time of its own choosing. It is the only case in this collection of a ruler deliberately

executing the second crack against himself in order to control its timing, and it bought him the longest stable reign in Syracusan history.

Conquest, twice, and what it produced

The third crack — an outside apex defeating the local floor and imposing a settlement — occurs twice, and the two instances sit at opposite ends of the moral scale while behaving identically as mechanism.

In 344 Corinth sent Timoleon, at Syracusan invitation, with a force so small that the sources treat its success as providential. He demolished the citadel, put law courts on the site, repopulated the city with forty thousand advertised strangers, sold the houses at auction, and revised the code. The framework predicts that change imposed by an external elite produces durable settlements, because the imposer has no local faction to reward and can therefore write general rules — and this is exactly what happened. Timoleon's is the only Syracusan settlement that held, and the only Syracusan constitution not undone by its own beneficiaries within a decade. That it was accomplished by a man from the mother city that had never governed Syracuse, and could not have, is the point: he was the one actor in five hundred years with standing and no stake.

In 212 the other instance. Rome besieged the city for close to two years and could not take it — Archimedes' cranes and catapults did what the sources say they did. It fell in stages, and each stage is a variation on the study's oldest theme. The outer circuit went during the annual festival of Artemis, when a Roman party scaled a neglected stretch of wall near the Hexapylon and opened the gates on drunk and sleeping guards; Epipolae and Euryalus, the fortifications Dionysius had built to correct the founding site's one great defect, were taken or surrendered within a day.

Then the last act, and it is the whole study compressed. The Sicilian troops and the Syracusan population wanted to surrender. The men who would not were the mercenaries and the Roman deserters, who knew what surrender meant for them. So at the end the floor's interests and the city's had separated completely, and the bought army held the city hostage against its own inhabitants' wishes. And it was ended by a purchase: Moericus, a Spanish mercenary captain in the Syracusan service, was persuaded to change sides — persuaded, on the fullest account, by his own brother, who was serving as an auxiliary in Marcellus's army. A merchant ship towed by a quadrireme crossed the Great Harbour in the dark, and Moericus opened a gate on Ortygia near the fountain of Arethusa.

Two brothers on two payrolls, and the city went to the better-funded one. And the gate stood beside the spring that was the reason Archias had chosen the islet five

hundred and twenty-one years earlier: fresh water on a defensible rock, the property that let a small armed body hold a place against a large population nearby. It had done that job for the landing party, and for the gamoroi, and for Gelon, and for Dionysius and his son, and for Agathocles, and for Hieron; and the last man to use it used it to let Rome in.

Archimedes was killed against orders. The treasures went to Rome. And the *lex Hieronica* was kept — rate, procedure and name — because the conquerors examined it and could not think of an improvement.

The repricings, and what they bought

The framework's honest objection holds that popular pressure, though never the proximate agent, is a real cause: the credible threat of a rising forces a cornered elite to widen the settlement, and because a revocable promise cannot defuse a credible threat, the concession must be something the elite cannot easily take back.

Syracuse supplies two clear repricings and they behave as the theory predicts, with one variant that matters.

413–412. The city had just destroyed the largest expeditionary force in Greek history, using a citizen levy: hoplites on the walls, rowers in the harbour, two years of general mobilisation. The men who had done that were in a position to demand, and what they obtained was a constitutional settlement — magistracies by lot, an elected board of lawgivers, and a code. That is precisely a credible commitment: a permanent transfer of institutional power, not a promise, granted because a promise would not have sufficed.

466–461. After Thrasybulus fell, the assembly voted a colossal Zeus the Liberator and an annual festival, reserved the magistracies, fought the enfranchised mercenaries for several years, and then settled the whole island — exiles restored, mercenaries removed to Messenia with their movables, lands re-allotted among the citizens.

But note what the concessions consisted of, because Module 9 established the pattern and this module can now state its consequence for change. Every Syracusan repricing was paid in **procedure** and never in **property**. Magistracies by lot; a penal and procedural code; a festival; a re-allotment that the next strong man would undo. Nothing that gave a Syracusan a claim on his own house that would survive a change of ruler. So each repricing was consumed by the next fracture, and the ratchet the framework describes — concessions that cannot be taken back, accumulating over centuries — never engaged.

And there is a variant in how popular pressure operated here that is worth stating, because it explains the thinness. In the framework's usual cases the common man's

causal weight is a *threat* that must be bought off, and buying it off durably requires an institutional concession. At Syracuse he was more often a *resource* to be bought: Dionysius armed a thousand propertyless men at his own expense, gave land and houses to the common people, made freed slaves citizens; Agathocles freed such slaves as were fit to serve. **A resource is worth less to its owner than a threat, because a resource can be purchased once and a threat must be continually appeased.** The Syracusan poor were repeatedly and materially paid, and got almost no durable rights, and the two facts are the same fact.

The dignifying myth, built on schedule

The framework closes on the observation that a widened settlement prefers to tell the newly admitted that they rose and won rather than that they were let in — because a man who believes he won will defend the order he thinks he wrested his place from. Syracuse supplies the cleanest instance of that construction in the collection, and also the cleanest demonstration of its limits.

Within weeks of Thrasybulus's expulsion in 466 the Syracusans voted a colossal statue to Zeus the Liberator and instituted an annual Festival of Liberation, with games held on the anniversary and four hundred and fifty bulls sacrificed and eaten by the citizens.

Every element of the myth is present and it was built at once: a god of freedom, a founding date, an annual rehearsal, a public feast, athletic contests. Nobody had to invent it later; the beneficiaries constructed it immediately, and it ran for six decades.

And in 405 the same city, with that festival presumably still in its calendar and its statue still standing, voted Dionysius a bodyguard of six hundred men of his own selection.

A commemoration is not an instrument. An annual festival can install a memory and a sentiment; it cannot price a vote. The men in the assembly at Leontini knew perfectly well what had happened in 466 — they celebrated it every year — and the knowledge was worth nothing against a plausible speech, a manufactured emergency and a relocated audience. This is the sharpest available evidence for a proposition this collection has been circling: that the dignifying story and the durable protection are different objects, that a society can have the first in abundance while possessing none of the second, and that the first is much cheaper to produce, which is why so many orders have it.

Reading Syracusan change against the framework

The law holds without an exception, and the apparent exception is a lesson in how to test one. In five hundred years the ruled produced exactly one episode that can be mistaken for a successful rising, and 485 fails every structural test: no battle, no dispossession, no redistribution, an elite that withdrew intact to a fortress in the middle of its own estates, a full restoration of property within a few years, and a labouring class returned to its place and thereafter erased from the record. What changed was the apex, in a direction none of the risers chose. **The test of structural change is whether the settlement moved, and possession of a city is not possession of the settlement.** The corollary is a caution for the whole collection: an interregnum with a sympathetic cast is the easiest thing in the world to misread as a revolution, and the misreading is not a neutral error — it is the dignifying myth assembling itself out of an event that did not happen.

What the episode does yield is narrower. **An elite that is its own floor can be evicted but not dispossessed**, since the source of its standing lies outside the walls; it cannot police a town against the whole of its population, and it loses nothing structural by declining to try. That describes a vulnerability to inconvenience, not a crack in a floor. And the net effect ran the other way from the romantic reading: the vacancy the interlude created was filled, at the displaced elite's own invitation, by a professional army — so the one popular rising in Syracusan history produced the first Syracusan tyranny.

Where the floor is purchased, fracture is not a crack but the weather, and that explains the rate. The framework's account, following Skocpol, treats elite fracture as an event requiring an explanation — usually fiscal-military strain from outside. Syracuse needed no such explanation, because its floor was a market that any faction with silver could enter at any time. Eight changes of apex in three centuries, every one resolved by soldiers changing hands. **An order whose floor is an institution changes when something breaks it; an order whose floor is a purchase changes whenever someone can outbid.** Any case in this collection that hires its decisive force should be expected to show the same accelerated rate, and the paranoid architecture such orders build — the citadel, the informers, the ban on lateral coordination — should be read as a rational response to a crack that never closes.

Elite overproduction can be manufactured rather than bred. Syracuse produced its surplus claimants by enfranchising mercenaries, freeing slaves and importing forty thousand settlers, all for military and fiscal reasons, and reaped exactly the political consequences the theory predicts a generation later: seven thousand excluded men seizing two quarters of the city in 461, and an immigrant potter's son destroying the

oligarchy in 317. **A state that manufactures citizens to fill its floor manufactures claimants for its offices, and the bill arrives about one generation after the enfranchisement.**

Exhaustion, for a purchased floor, means an unmet payroll rather than a bled-out army — and an unpaid army does not dissolve, it changes sides or takes a city. The Mamertines at Messana are the demonstration. Hieron II's manoeuvre against his own mercenaries is the one case in this collection of a ruler deliberately triggering the second crack against himself in order to control its timing, and it purchased him fifty-four years.

And the answer to the question the colonial template cannot ask. An order with no metropole does not end when a distant will empties. It ends the way it began and the way it changed every time in between: **the floor is bought by somebody else.** Gelon was invited in with an army; Dionysius bought one with a vote; Dion bought one in the Peloponnese; Agathocles came back as a mercenary captain; and at the end a Spanish officer opened a gate beside the fountain of Arethusa because his brother, on the other payroll, asked him to. Every structural change in Syracusan history, including the last one, was a transaction — and in the final week the population wanted to surrender and the bought floor would not let them, which is the exact statement of what it means for an order's force and its people to have no interest in common.

The module that follows is the grim accounting: what the whole arrangement cost, set against what it produced, with both columns kept honestly and neither used to cancel the other.

A note on sources. The rising of 485 and the surrender to Gelon are Herodotus 7.155, quoted in Module 1. The overthrow of Thrasybulus, the exclusion of the enfranchised mercenaries and their revolt, the Festival of Liberation with its colossal Zeus Eleutherios and four hundred and fifty bulls, and the general settlement of the 460s are Diodorus 11.67–68 and 11.72–76; the accession of Dionysius, Diodorus 13.91–96; Dion's return, Diodorus 16 and Plutarch's *Dion*; Timoleon's expedition and settlement, Diodorus 16.65–83 and Plutarch's *Timoleon*; Agathocles' rise, exiles and seizure, Diodorus 19.3–9, with his father's arrival on Timoleon's resettlement scheme reported in the same tradition and his birthplace given variously as Thermae and Rhegium. All of this reaches us through the pipe described in Module 7 and the figures are Diodorus's. Polybius 1.7–9 supplies the Mamertine seizure of Messana and Hieron's destruction of his own mercenaries, quoted in Module 1 from W. R. Paton's Loeb of 1922. The events of 215–214 are Livy 24.4–7 and 21–26 with Polybius 7.2–8, subject to the cautions on Livy set out in Module 8. For the siege of 213–212: Polybius 8.3–7 on Archimedes' engines, with the portion of Polybius describing the final

capture lost; Livy 24.33–34 and 25.23–31 for the assault during the festival of Artemis, the taking of the Hexapylon and Epipolae, the divergence between the Syracusan population wanting surrender and the mercenaries and Roman deserters refusing, and the betrayal of Ortygia by Moericus at the gate near the fountain of Arethusa; Plutarch's *Marcellus* 14–19 for the engines and the death of Archimedes. The detail that Moericus was persuaded by a brother serving as an auxiliary in Marcellus's army is in the tradition deriving from Livy and is reported by the standard modern accounts; it is a single-source detail. Livy is a Roman writing two centuries later with an interest in Marcellus's clemency and in Syracusan volatility, and the accounts of the final assault differ in their sequence. The framework tested here is Thomas J. Bryan's *Elite Chaos*, which draws in turn on Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* (1979) for state breakdown, Jack Goldstone's *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (1991) and Peter Turchin's structural-demographic work for elite overproduction, and Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson's *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (2006) for franchise extension as credible commitment; each is paraphrased and credited, not quoted. The Roman retention of the *lex Hieronica* is from Cicero's *Verrines*, discussed in Module 6.

Module 11 · GAME IN THE SUBURBS

Module 11: the grim accounting — what five centuries of this arrangement cost in the sword and in the soil, who was still able to remember the violence that made it, and what it built that would not otherwise have been built

Who was still able to remember

Start with the forgetting, because it is the part of the accounting that leaves no bones.

An order that lasts long enough stops looking like an arrangement and starts looking like the world. The violence that made it recedes into a founding story, then into a date, then into nothing, and the people living inside it experience its terms as facts of nature rather than as the outcome of somebody's decision. That is the deep end of the framework's gradient, and it is what makes an old order cheap: nobody costs out an obligation they cannot conceive of as optional.

Syracuse gives us an unusually exact measurement of how that forgetting is distributed, and the measurement is that it is not distributed evenly at all.

By the fourth century no Syracusan appears to have given a moment's thought to the Sicels driven off Ortygia in 733. The event survives in the record as a participle — *having first driven out the Sicels* — attached to a founding notice, with no justification offered and none apparently felt necessary. Ortygia was simply where the city was. That the ground had been taken from people who lived on it was, for the descendants of the takers, not a suppressed fact but an uninteresting one.

Then, in 394, Dionysius attacked Tauromenium, which was held by Sicels. Diodorus explains why they fought as hard as they did: their fathers had told them that the ancient Sicels had been driven out of that region by the Greeks when Naxos was founded, and they therefore believed they had just cause to be avenging the wrong done to their ancestors.

Three hundred and forty years. The people who took the ground had let the taking dissolve into the furniture of the world within a few generations. The people it was taken from were still transmitting it, father to son, across ten or eleven generations, as a live grievance with a specific location attached.

Forgetting is a function of position. The beneficiaries of a conquest forget it at exactly the rate the dispossessed keep it, and the reason is not that one party is more

sentimental. It is that for the beneficiary the arrangement is what he has, and requires no explanation; for the dispossessed it is what happened to him, and explains everything. This is the single most useful measurement in the module, because it tells a reader where to look when a source says an order was universally accepted: it was universally accepted by the people the source was talking to.

The sword column

What follows is an accounting, not a catalogue of atrocities, and it has to be kept with the source discipline this study has used throughout. Almost every figure comes through Diodorus, at three to four centuries' distance, from Timaeus or Philistus; the large round numbers are indicators of scale rather than counts, and are given here as what they are.

The taking of the ground, 733 onward. Unquantifiable and not small. The expulsion from Ortygia; Leontini cleared by arms five years later; the hinterland taken in stages across a century and a half through Heloros, Acrae, Casmenae and Camarina; Camarina revolting and being destroyed. No numbers survive from any of it. The archaeological picture, which shows more cohabitation than the literary tradition admits, does not make the violence smaller — it makes it less tidy.

The Deinomenid sorting, 485–478. Camarina razed and its whole population moved to Syracuse. Half the people of Gela moved. Megara Hyblaea and the Euboean settlement taken, their notables enfranchised at Syracuse and their commons sold for export out of Sicily. Herodotus gives no totals; the operation involved at minimum several tens of thousands of people relocated and an unknown but substantial number sold into slavery abroad. Naxos and Catana cleared by Hieron in 476 and ten thousand settlers planted in their place.

Himera, 480. Diodorus reports a hundred and fifty thousand Carthaginian dead. The figure is not credible and Herodotus, closer to the event, gives none.

The civil wars of the 460s. Several years of fighting between the restored democracy and more than seven thousand enfranchised soldiers holding two quarters of the city, ending in the removal of the survivors to Messenia. No casualty figures.

The Athenian expedition, 415–413. The best-documented episode in the case and the one with the firmest numbers. Thucydides says the Athenians and their allies were destroyed with a total destruction, fleet and army and everything, and that few out of many returned home. The prisoners put into the quarries were, he says, not less than seven thousand; they were kept there seventy days on half a pint of water and a pint of grain a day, in the open, with the dead left where they fell, and after seventy days all except the Athenians and the Sicilian and Italian Greeks were sold. Plutarch adds that

those sold were branded on the forehead with a horse. On the Syracusan side, casualties are not recorded at all.

The Carthaginian invasions, 409–405. Selinus stormed; Diodorus gives sixteen thousand killed and five thousand captured. Himera taken, with three thousand prisoners reported killed after the capture. Acragas besieged for eight months and abandoned by its population. Gela and Camarina evacuated. These are Diodorus's figures and are single-source.

Dionysius, 405–367. Naxos and Catana destroyed and their populations sold. Leontini emptied into Syracuse. Motya stormed in 397 with a general massacre and the survivors sold. Rhegium besieged and starved into surrender in 386, its people sold, its commander tortured to death. Tauromenium cleared of most of its Sicels. Repeated campaigns across the island and into Italy over four decades.

The factional wars, 357–344. No usable figures, and the absence is itself the datum. What survives instead is the state of the country afterwards, which is the subject of the next section.

Agathocles, 317–289. The purge of 317, given variously as six hundred, four thousand or ten thousand killed and exiled. The African expedition of 310–307, in which he abandoned his own army. Egesta in 307, where on Diodorus's account he demanded money from a friendly city, tortured and killed a large part of the population — Diodorus's figure is around ten thousand — sold the women and children, and renamed the place. The wealthiest of his opponents invited to leave the city and killed on the road.

The Roman siege, 213–212. Close to two years of blockade, an assault during the festival of Artemis, and a sack in which Marcellus gave his men a day's leave to plunder. Archimedes killed against orders.

Nothing in that list includes the ordinary running costs: the chattel slaves in the households and workshops across five centuries, the dependent labourers whose name we cannot even fix, the men who died in the quarries after the Athenians, or the mercenaries whose deaths were a line item in somebody's budget. Those do not appear because nobody counted them, and the fact that nobody counted them belongs in the accounting.

The column nobody keeps

Now the second column, and it turns out to apply here in a form the standard mechanism does not describe.

The usual metabolic argument runs like this: an advanced order, through coordination and intensive agriculture and long-distance supply, lifts a population

above the natural carrying capacity of its own ground. It is a loan against complexity. When conquest or revolution disrupts the coordination, the note is called, and the debt is paid in famine and disease among people who were only alive because the machinery was working.

Syracuse does not fit the first half of that. Module 1 established it: the plain behind the city grew cereals, Sicily grew them on a scale mainland Greece could not approach, and Syracuse never depended on an imported food supply the way a maritime city with thin soil must. No enemy could starve it by cutting a sea lane, and none tried. There is no overshoot here to be called in.

And yet the note was called, in the middle of the fourth century, and the evidence is explicit.

By around 345, after sixty years of factional war, tyrannies, invasions and depopulation, Sicily was in a state the sources describe in terms that are hard to read as rhetorical. Plutarch, drawing on the Sicilian tradition, says the great market-place of Syracuse was so overgrown with rank herbage that it had become a pasture for horses, with the grooms lying in the grass while the animals fed; that other towns, with very few exceptions, had become full of stags and wild boars, so that men with nothing better to do went hunting and found game in the suburbs and about the walls. Elsewhere he says that part of the rest of Sicily was by then utterly depopulated and desolate through the long continuance of war, and that most of the surviving cities were held by barbarians and unemployed soldiers ready to embrace any turn of government.

Then he states the causal chain, in the reasoning he attributes to Timoleon and the surviving Syracusans, and it is as exact a statement of a metabolic debt as any ancient source provides: they wrote to Corinth to send people out of Greece to inhabit Syracuse again, *for otherwise the country would grow barren and unprofitable, if the ground were not plowed.*

The land had not failed. The soil of eastern Sicily in 345 was the same soil that had made the gamoroi rich. **What had been destroyed was the coordination that turned fertile land into food and people** — the network of working cities, the markets, the harbours, the seasonal labour, and above all the population that ploughed. Two generations of deportation, enslavement, exile, massacre and mercenary occupation had removed the people, and the removal of the people took the productive capacity with it.

So this is a second and distinct form of the metabolic mechanism, and it is worth naming because the remedy is different. **The classic form is overshoot: a population lifted above local carrying capacity by imported food, which starves when the**

imports stop. The second form is abandonment: a fertile land emptied of the coordination that worked it, which reverts. Nobody starved in a Sicilian city in 345, because there was nobody left in it to starve. The debt was paid in desertion rather than in hunger, and the wild boar in the suburbs is what it looked like.

And unlike an overshoot, this form can be repaid. Timoleon repaid it deliberately and by exactly the right instrument: a proclamation in Greece that land and houses would be given to any who came, and forty thousand settlers seated on the vacant land of Syracuse and ten thousand more at Agyrium, with Diodorus and Plutarch differing on the total in a range from forty to sixty thousand. He was importing ploughmen, and he and his contemporaries said so. The later fourth century is, on the archaeological record of rural settlement, one of the most prosperous horizons in Greek Sicilian history — a genuine recovery, visible in the ground, following directly on a deliberate repopulation.

An overshoot can only be survived; an abandonment can be reversed, if someone will pay to import the people. That is a real addition to the accounting, and it is why this module's metabolic column shows a debt called and then, unusually, discharged.

The floor nobody built

There is a third item in the accounting that belongs to neither column and that the record forces on any reader of this case: a great many of the deaths at Syracuse were inflicted by the ground itself.

The Great Harbour is fed by the Anapus and the Ciane, and the low land at its head is marsh. Every army that besieged Syracuse camped in or beside it, and the results are consistent across two centuries.

In 413 the Athenians, encamped in the marshy flats, sickened; disease is one of the reasons the sources give for the deterioration of the expedition before its destruction. In 396 the Carthaginian army under Himilco, having taken the suburbs and pillaged the temple of Demeter and Kore, was struck by an epidemic that destroyed it. Diodorus offers the divine explanation first — the desecration of the goddesses' sanctuary — and then, without apparent sense of contradiction, an entirely practical one: that great numbers of people were gathered in one place, that it was the season most productive of plagues, that the summer had been unusually hot, and that the location itself was responsible for the extent of it. He then describes the course of the disease clinically, from catarrh through swelling of the throat, burning, pain in the sinews of the back, heaviness in the limbs, dysentery and pustules over the whole body, to death on the fifth or sixth day; and he notes that the nursing broke down because

those who tended the sick were themselves seized, so that brothers deserted brothers and friends abandoned friends out of fear. Modern analyses of the symptoms have proposed smallpox or typhus and have suggested a connection to the epidemic that struck Athens in the 420s. His figure for the dead — a hundred and fifty thousand, seen lying unburied in heaps — is not credible as a count and is credible as an indication that the army ceased to exist.

And in 212, with Marcellus besieging the city, plague struck again in the same ground, killing the Carthaginian relief army under Himilco and Hippocrates almost entirely, and touching the Romans less severely because the long blockade had acclimatised them.

Three besieging armies destroyed or crippled by disease in the same marshes across two hundred years. **The site that supplied the position also supplied a biological floor, and across the whole span of this study it killed more of Syracuse's enemies than any Syracusan weapon did, including Archimedes' engines.** That is worth entering in a grim accounting for two reasons: because those deaths are part of the cost of the arrangement even though nobody chose them, and because a study of what makes a position defensible should not stop at the walls. The affordances of ground include its pathogens.

What it built

An accounting with only one side is an indictment, and this project does not write indictments. The other column has to be kept, and kept without using it to cancel anything.

Out of the Dionysian arms programme came the torsion catapult and the warship larger than the trireme — two innovations that changed Mediterranean warfare for the next five hundred years and that were built at Syracuse because a purchased army required an arms industry. Out of the property litigation that followed the fall of the first tyranny came the systematic art of persuasion, which within a century was the core of Greek higher education and which formed the educated classes of the Mediterranean world for a thousand years. Out of the settlement of 412 came the Laws of Diocles, which other Sicilian cities used for something over three centuries and which later legislators dared only to interpret. Out of Hieron's administration came a tax code so serviceable that Rome kept it, and its name, for two hundred years.

Out of Syracusan patronage, or Syracusan soil, came Epicharmus and Sophron; the finest coin dies struck anywhere in antiquity, signed by their engravers; a theatre cut into the rock of the Temenites hill; Pindar's first Pythian and Bacchylides' odes for

Hieron; the plays Aeschylus wrote in Sicily and the grave he was given at Gela; and Archimedes, who is not a small item on anyone's ledger.

None of that cancels the column above it, and the column above it does not cancel any of that. Both were produced by the same arrangement, frequently by the same men and the same money. The catapult and the quarries were built by the same programme in the same decade, out of the same extraction, by a ruler who wrote bad verse and put a poet in a hole for saying so.

Reading the Syracusan accounting against the framework

The first finding concerns the forgetting, and it should be carried into every case in this collection. An order becomes furniture at a rate that differs by position within it. The men who held the plain of Syracuse in 400 had let the taking of that plain dissolve into a subordinate clause; the Sicels at Tauromenium in 394 were still telling their sons why they had a right to that particular hill, three hundred and forty years after they lost it. **The beneficiaries forget at exactly the rate the dispossessed transmit, and neither is a fact about temperament — it is a fact about what the arrangement is *for* each of them.** For the beneficiary it is what he has and needs no account of; for the dispossessed it is what happened and accounts for everything. When a source reports that an order was universally accepted, the question to ask is who the source was talking to.

The second finding adds a second failure mode to the metabolic column. The standard mechanism is overshoot — a population lifted above local carrying capacity by coordination and trade, which starves when the coordination breaks. Syracuse had no overshoot; it sat on cereal land and could feed itself. And the note was called anyway, in the fourth century, by a different route: **abandonment.** Sixty years of deportation, enslavement, exile and mercenary occupation removed the people who worked a landscape that remained perfectly fertile, and the land reverted — the agora under grass, boar in the suburbs, cities held by unemployed soldiers. Plutarch's sources state the mechanism without needing a theory for it: the country would grow barren if the ground were not ploughed.

The distinction matters because the remedies differ. **An overshoot can only be survived; an abandonment can be reversed by importing people, and at Syracuse it was.** Timoleon's proclamation in Greece and the forty to sixty thousand settlers who answered it constitute a deliberate metabolic reconstruction, and the archaeological record of rural settlement shows it worked. Any case in this collection where a conquest depopulates a fertile region should be tested for this second form rather than the first, and the test is whether anyone paid to bring people back.

The third finding is about the ground. Three besieging armies were destroyed or crippled by disease in the marshes at the head of the Great Harbour — Athenians in 413, Carthaginians in 396, Carthaginians again in 212 — and Diodorus's account of the second is a piece of fourth-century epidemiology sitting inside a providential explanation, naming crowding, season, heat and terrain in the same paragraph as the wrath of Demeter. **A position's defensibility includes its pathogens, and an accounting that counts only what the defenders' weapons did will understate both what the site was worth and what the wars cost.**

And a caution about the numbers themselves, which is the module's methodological residue. Almost every figure above is Diodorus's, and Diodorus's large round numbers — a hundred and fifty thousand at Himera, a hundred and fifty thousand plague dead, ten thousand at Egesta — are not counts and were never meant to be read as counts. They are markers meaning *an army ceased to exist* or *a city was destroyed*. The one number in this study that can be relied on is Thucydides' seven thousand in the quarries, and he gives it as a floor rather than a total: not less than seven thousand. **A grim accounting that reports ancient casualty figures as arithmetic is doing something worse than exaggerating; it is lending the appearance of precision to a genre that had no interest in it.** The honest form is the range, the attribution, and the admission that the largest categories — the enslaved, the deported, the dependent labourers, the ordinary dead of five centuries — were never counted by anybody, and that their absence from the ledger is not evidence that they were few.

The module that follows is the last: what converged with the rest of this collection and what diverged, and the strongest case that can be made *for* the Syracusan arrangement by someone who lived under it, stated fully and answered without flinching.

A note on sources. The Sicels at Tauromenium and their transmitted grievance are Diodorus 14.88.1, given in close paraphrase with C. H. Oldfather's Loeb consulted; Diodorus is reporting a motive attributed to defenders in a siege, which is the kind of thing a historian supplies rather than discovers, and it is used here as evidence that such a claim was current and intelligible in Sicily rather than as a transcript of what the defenders said. Herodotus 7.156 supplies the Deinomenid transfers; Thucydides 7.87 the quarries and the figure of not less than seven thousand, quoted in Module 5 from Richard Crawley's public-domain translation of 1874; Plutarch, *Nicias* 29, the branding. Casualty figures for Selinus, Himera, Egesta and the Agathoclean purge are Diodorus's (13.57–62; 20.71; 19.6–8) and are single-source, uncorroborated, and in the case of the round hundreds of thousands not credible as counts; the range for the purge of 317 spans six hundred to ten thousand across Diodorus, Justin and later

summaries. The state of Sicily around 345 is Plutarch, *Timoleon* 1 and 22, quoted from the public-domain Clough revision of the Dryden translation; Plutarch is writing three and a half centuries later, drawing on Timaeus, within a biography organised to magnify Timoleon's achievement, so the desolation he describes is exactly the thing his subject's greatness requires — the picture is corroborated in outline by Diodorus 16.82–83, which independently describes the land as vacant and records the proclamation and the settlers, but the vividness is Plutarch's. The settler figures are forty thousand for Syracuse and ten thousand for Agyrium in Diodorus, and sixty thousand in Plutarch citing Athanis, and are given as that range. The plague of 396 is Diodorus 14.70–71 and 14.76, given in close paraphrase; the symptom list has been analysed in the modern medical-historical literature with smallpox and typhus both proposed and neither established, and the proposed link to the Athenian epidemic of 430–426 is a hypothesis rather than a finding. The plague of 212 is Livy 25.26. The archaeological evidence for a later fourth-century recovery in Sicilian rural settlement is the standard reading of the survey material and is credited to Franco De Angelis and the field-survey literature; population estimates for Syracuse at any period vary by a factor of several between specialists and none is given here. Strabo 6.2.4 describes the circuit of the city in his own day. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited: De Angelis on Sicilian demography, economy and settlement; R. J. A. Talbert on Timoleon and the resettlement; Eric W. Marsden on the origins of torsion artillery.

Module 12 · ONLY INTERPRETERS OF THE LAWGIVER

Module 12: convergence and divergence — what Syracuse confirmed, what it broke, what an order looks like when it has almost no instruments, and the strongest case that can be made for the arrangement by someone who lived inside it

What the case turned out to be

This study began as a test of a framework built on modern colonial conquests, applied to a Greek city five centuries in the making and unmaking. The expectation was that the shape would bend in the ways the brief predicted: a robe cut for a distant metropole, formation withheld from a conquered majority, a seam split by distance, and a collapse arriving when a faraway will emptied.

Almost none of that survived contact with the sources, and the reason is a single structural fact established in the opening landscape. Archias sailed from Corinth in 733 and Corinth never governed Syracuse. There was no metropole. And once that is granted, the case turns into something more useful than a variation: **Syracuse is the corpus's control experiment in the near-total absence of instruments.**

Consider what this city did not have. No land register, no cadastre, no deed, no archive of conveyances, no court of title. No metropolitan statute standing over anybody. No corporate body — no chartered council, no independent priesthood, no senate, nothing that outlived its members and held property in its own name. No law of succession. No standing administration until the third century. No inscribed public record of its own decisions. Every other case in this collection has several of these; most have all of them. Syracuse had a popular assembly, a revered penal code, a citadel, and a payroll.

What this study has therefore measured, module by module, is what an order does when almost nothing stands between a man and whoever currently holds the rock at the mouth of the harbour. The result is the most transferable thing the case produces, and it is not the result a reader might expect.

Where it converged

The framework held on its foundations, and it held without needing adjustment.

Force came first and belief was laid over it afterwards. The founding act was a seizure, stated as a seizure; every subsequent regime began with soldiers; and the legitimating expenditure — the horses, the odes, the dedications — followed the force rather than preceding it.

Surveillance was the tell of a belief that never took. Hieron I, crowned at Olympia and Delphi, sung by Pindar, joint dedicator with his city of Etruscan spoils at the sanctuary of Zeus, was paying women to listen at dinner parties in his own capital. Aristotle catalogues the practice and reaches for Syracuse for his examples. The most physically eloquent statement of the same thing is the wall Dionysius built across the neck of Ortygia in peacetime, with the mercenaries quartered behind it and the fleet locked behind a gate admitting one hull at a time.

The settlement was sorted, and the sorting was the operation. Gelon's disposal of captured cities — notables imported and enfranchised, commons sold *for export out of Sicily* — is as clean an instance as the collection contains.

The extraction ceiling was set by the dials. Exit was open, so nobody with legs and a trade was taken to the bone; those who could not move were.

Structural change came only from the elite side. Eight changes of apex in three centuries, every one an elite fracture resolved by soldiers changing hands, and the single episode that looks like a popular rising — 485 — turns out on inspection to be an eviction followed by a full restoration, with the settlement untouched and the labouring class returned to its place and then erased from the record.

The dignifying myth was constructed by the beneficiaries, immediately. A colossal Zeus the Liberator, an annual Festival of Liberation with games and four hundred and fifty bulls, instituted within weeks of the tyranny's fall in 466.

And the recursion held, with no gaps. The Sicans claimed to have always been there and Thucydides says they came from Iberia; the Sicels beat the Sicans, took the good ground, and left their name on the island; Archias carried a lineage-title whose whole content was that a conquest had been a homecoming; and his descendants held the plain under a name — *those who got a share* — that recorded a distribution and became a claim of blood. Four claims of priority, each made by the beneficiary of an earlier taking, none of them false to the people who held them.

Where it diverged, and what each divergence taught

The conquest required no fiction, and the reason generalises. The framework's colonial cases produce elaborate legal instruments — vacancy, recognition, divisibility — because a power that governs by universal law cannot announce a seizure as a seizure to an audience at home. Thucydides records the taking of Ortygia in a participle.

Nobody had to be persuaded, so nothing was drafted. **The elaborateness of a settlement's legal fiction measures the constraint on the settler, not the gentleness of the settlement, and a study that reads a conquest's decency off the scrupulousness of its paperwork has the sign backwards.**

With one limit, discovered in Module 6. Extraction *did* produce fictions — a vision of Demeter, a fictitious conspiracy, a fake bankruptcy sale — because a householder with silver in a jar has leverage a dispossessed Sicel did not. **A fiction appears wherever voluntary cooperation is needed and cannot be compelled, and tracks how much cooperation is required rather than how much force is available.**

The settlement was the least durable leg rather than the most. Six comprehensive redistributions in two centuries, each one's beneficiaries the next one's dispossessed. **A settlement re-sources title only if there is a source; where title has no source outside the ruler, a settlement buys loyalty to a person and cannot buy loyalty to an order.** The one Syracusan division that held is the one that was *priced* — Timoleon's, which sold the houses at auction and reserved the sitting occupants the power to purchase their own.

The robe faced a peer group rather than a paymaster, and bought the wrong commodity. Syracuse spent more on legitimacy than almost any comparable state and got no discount: the floor stayed purchased, the citadel stayed walled. **Legitimacy bought from a peer audience buys standing among rulers; it does not buy obedience from the ruled, and the two are not convertible.** They were buying the right currency for the problem they felt — the contempt of the eastern Greeks — and the wrong one for the problem they had.

Formation is two decisions, not one. Syracuse withheld its own formation as completely as any power in the corpus, and the Sicel order did not hold the field; it dissolved. The reason is that the modern colonial powers withhold *and preserve*, because indirect rule requires the chief and the elder to keep functioning. Syracuse ruled through nobody and preserved nothing — deportations, razings, and the sack of Palice with its people sold. **Withholding formation preserves a conquered order only where the boundary and the apparatus are also policed. Withhold and preserve gives you Kenya; withhold and destroy gives you Sicily; and the second is not the gentler.** The altar refilled with what was standing, which was a Greek city running a full calendar for its own purposes.

There is a fourth dial, and rulers reach for it first. Aristotle, cataloguing tyranny with Syracusan examples, puts it before the informers: forbid clubs, common meals, education and meetings for discussion, and *take every means to prevent people from knowing one another, for acquaintance begets mutual confidence.* **The capacity of the**

ruled to know and trust one another determines whether the cost column is calculated alone or together, and it can be attacked immediately, unlike force which must be paid for monthly and formation which takes a generation. Petalism shows a democracy attacking the same thing from the other end and hollowing out its own public life within a few years.

The default never engaged, and the reason is a loop. A default requires interlocking elite positions; interlocking positions mean the elite can act in concert; and a ruler whose own place rests on nothing but his grip cannot permit that. Philistus was exiled for marrying Leptines' daughter without permission — not for disloyalty, but for forming a bond with another member of the inner circle. **A ruler lacking an external guarantee of his own position must suppress the coordination that would produce a default, and the suppression prevents the construction of the instruments that would have supplied the guarantee.** The absence reproduces itself, which is why every Syracusan regime inherited a stratum with no positions that could survive a change of ruler, and therefore no reason not to change rulers.

Exit protects the individual and prevents the institution. The door could not be closed, so extraction had a ceiling and nobody here was ground down as helots were. And a faction that can leave never has to bargain, so the stalemate that produces charters never formed: in five centuries the only negotiated settlement in the record is an evacuation. The Syracusan substitute for a law against flight was to eliminate the destinations, and by 400 a coast that had held eight Greek *poleis* held one. **Where exit cannot be prohibited, imperial expansion among comparable neighbours is functionally a law against flight.**

Liberties are what large claimants take, because a rule is the only thing divisible to everyone at once. Small factions were paid in estates and houses and lost them at the next turn; the men who defended the city in 413 could only be paid in a constitution. And admission tells the same story: Syracuse let in mercenaries, freed slaves, Sicels and forty thousand advertised strangers, and almost none of it left residue, because **admission granted is not admission won.** When the democracy of 466 pushed the enfranchised soldiers back out, they had no charter to invoke and took Achradina and Ortygia by arms instead.

Extraction by ambush has a declining yield. Dionysius's livestock tax is the mechanism recorded step by step: valuation, slaughter, a decree against slaughter, the abandonment of stock-rearing, and finally an amnesty offered to persuade subjects to own animals again. **An unpredictable take makes visible wealth irrational, so the base contracts and must be repurchased.** Against it, Hieron's tithe — a tenth of the

flow by written contract, kept by Rome along with its name so that the taxpayers should not be unsettled.

Where the floor is bought, fracture is the weather rather than a crack, which explains a rate of change no other case in the corpus has to account for. And elite overproduction can be manufactured rather than bred: a state that enfranchises ten thousand mercenaries and imports forty thousand settlers manufactures claimants for a fixed number of offices, and the bill arrives a generation later.

And the metabolic note can be called without an overshoot. Syracuse fed itself and had no import dependency to cut; the debt was paid instead in abandonment — the market-place under grass, boar hunted in the suburbs, the land reverting because the people who ploughed it had been sold, exiled or killed. **An overshoot can only be survived; an abandonment can be reversed by importing people**, and Timoleon reversed it.

The result, stated plainly

Gather the divergences and they converge on one proposition, which is the study's contribution to the collection.

Syracuse is what an order looks like when the instruments are missing. And the result is not liberty.

A reader coming to this case from the modern conquests might expect the absence of registers, statutes and charters to read as an absence of oppression — no paperwork, no machinery, no bureaucratic net. What the record shows is the reverse. The city with no land register redistributed its territory six times in two centuries. The city with no metropole to satisfy stated its founding dispossession in a participle and felt no need to justify it. The city with no corporate body destroyed its own elite four times and ended with a mob hunting a royal family through their houses because there was no document anywhere that could establish who had held office and who had not. The city with no law of succession could not transmit fifty-four years of competent government past thirteen months.

The instrument that dispossesses is also the instrument that secures. A title that comes from a register can be taken by a court; it cannot be taken by an assembly vote or a night of soldiers. A title that comes from nothing but possession can be taken by anything. A people without such instruments is not thereby free of dispossession — it is dispossessed without paperwork, by whoever turns up, repeatedly, forever.

That is not an argument for the colonial statutes this collection has spent so long anatomising. Those statutes converted relations into things in order to take them, and the taking was the point. It is an argument about what the instruments *are*: they are the

machinery by which a claim is made to run through something other than a man, and once that machinery exists it can be turned. Cicero prosecuted a Roman governor under a Greek king's tax code. Nobody in Syracuse in 405 could prosecute anybody, because there was nothing to prosecute under.

The case for the arrangement

Now the strongest position against everything above, stated at its full strength and in the voice of someone who lived in it — because a study that will not state the case it is arguing with has not earned its conclusion.

You have written five centuries of my city as a machine that could not hold. Look at where it stood.

Sixty miles west of us was the frontier of Carthage — a great power with the corn of Africa, the silver of Iberia, a professional navy, and two hundred years of determination to take this island. It came, and came again. Selinus was stormed and sixteen thousand died. Himera was destroyed and its prisoners butchered on the spot where a Carthaginian general's grandfather had fallen. Acragas, the richest city in the Greek west, was abandoned by its own population after eight months. Gela and Camarina were evacuated. Every one of those cities had a constitution, and every one of those constitutions is a ruin you can walk through today.

Syracuse is the one that is still there. It is still there because at each crisis it did the thing you have spent twelve modules deploring: it put one man in command with money to pay soldiers, and it kept him there long enough to win. And what came out of that arrangement was not only survival. It was the catapult and the great warship, which no free city produced. It was Archimedes, whom a king kept. It was a code of law that a third of this island used for three hundred years and that the Romans thought too good to change. It was a tax system so just that a Roman governor was prosecuted at Rome for breaking it. It was the finest coinage ever struck by anyone.

And consider what it was to be an ordinary man here rather than elsewhere. In Sparta I would have been a helot, watched by a secret police and killed at the magistrates' discretion. In Attica I would have farmed thin soil and eaten Black Sea grain that a single defeat at sea could cut off. Here I was given land. I was given a house. I was given arms at the tyrant's expense when I could not afford them. If I was a slave and fit to serve, I was freed. If I was a foreigner, I was made a citizen. If I did not like it, no law stopped me walking to Acragas — and no ruler here ever passed such a law, in five hundred years, because none of them dared. You call that an absence of instruments. I call it an absence of chains.

You say our settlement kept being torn up. It kept being torn up in my favour. You say we had no charter. What good did Athens's charters do her when her fleet was in this harbour and her army was in our quarries? You say our arrangement could not be inherited. It lasted five hundred and twenty-one years, which is longer than the Athenian democracy by a factor of five, and it fell not to its own people but to Rome, which fell to nobody. Free Sicily existed for two centuries because Syracuse was willing to pay the price of a strong hand to keep it. You have counted the price. You have not counted what it bought.

Reading Syracuse against the framework

That case has to be answered rather than dismissed, and the answer has four parts, of which the first three concede a great deal.

The material claim is largely true and the study has said so throughout. A poor Syracusan really was better off than a Spartan helot or a Peruvian *mitayo*, and the reason is structural rather than sentimental: the door stood open, so the extraction had a ceiling, and the tyrants needed constituencies, so the benefit column was repeatedly filled with land, houses, arms and citizenship. Module 5 found that the men against whom the citadel and the informers were pointed were overwhelmingly the propertied. The redistribution machine was real, and it is why assemblies kept voting for it in daylight.

The achievements are real and none of them are propaganda. The torsion catapult and the quinquereme were built here. Rhetoric was invented here and formed the educated classes of the Mediterranean for a thousand years. The Laws of Diocles governed a third of the island for three and a half centuries. The *lex Hieronica* outlived its author by two hundred years and was retained by a conquering empire that could not improve on it. Archimedes was Syracusan. Hieron II's fifty-four years were, by any standard the ancient world offers, well governed. None of that is cancelled by anything in the preceding modules, and a reading that treats it as a fig leaf is not a reading, it is a verdict looking for evidence.

But the central empirical claim is false, and this study established it in its first module. Syracuse did not need a tyrant to survive. In 415–413 it destroyed the largest expeditionary force any Greek city ever launched, under a *democracy*, with an unpurchased citizen levy commanded by elected generals. That is the hardest test the city ever faced and it passed it with the constitution intact. The tyrannies were not the price of survival; they were what happened to be in place during some of the crises, and the argument that they were necessary is a retrospective one that the record does not support.

And the causation runs partly the other way, which is the answer's sharpest part. Module 1 found that where the same instrument faces outward and inward — where the army that fights Carthage is the army that holds Ortygia — the external threat becomes a structural requirement of internal rule, so that peace is the ruler's most dangerous moment. Diodorus states it without irony at the point Dionysius makes peace: he set about strengthening his tyranny *because he assumed that the Syracusans, now that they were relieved of the war, would have plenty of time to seek after the recovery of their liberty*, and the wall across Ortygia was begun in peacetime. He uses the same construction a second time, at the moment Dionysius turns to persecuting a poet. Carthage was real, dangerous, and not a fiction. But the proposition *we needed the strong hand because of the war* cannot be cleanly separated from the proposition *the strong hand needed the war*, and Syracusan rulers renewed that war on their own initiative more than once.

The deepest answer, though, is that the case is a defence of a decision nobody made.

The counter-position is framed as a bargain: liberty traded for security, knowingly, by people who understood the terms. No such bargain was ever struck. The gamoroi hired Gelon because they were sitting in a hill fort and wanted their land back. The assembly voted Dionysius a guard of six hundred because Carthage had taken four cities in three years and a plausible man had just accused the generals of taking bribes. Timoleon sold the houses of Syracuse because the war chest was empty and the mercenaries had to be paid. Hieron marched his own soldiers into a battle he meant them to lose because he could neither pay them nor disband them safely. Every one of those decisions is defensible from where the man stood, with the materials he had, against the alternatives he could see. Not one of them was a choice about what kind of order Syracuse should be.

That is the whole of what this study has to say, and it is why it was worth five hundred years of somebody else's history to say it. An order is not chosen. It is arrived at, one forced move at a time, by people solving the problem in front of them with the instruments to hand — and the instruments to hand are themselves the residue of the last man's forced move. Ortygia was taken in 733 because a small armed body could hold it against a large population living nearby, and that property was still there in 405 when the large population living nearby was the Syracusans, and still there in 212 when a Spanish officer opened a gate beside the spring because his brother was on the other payroll. Nobody designed that. **A position is a set of affordances that outlasts the problem it was gathered for, and men who have never met reach for**

the same one and arrive at the same answer, centuries apart, each believing he is improvising.

Which leaves the last question the case poses, and it is the one the title names. In five hundred and twenty-one years Syracuse transmitted almost nothing. Six settlements gone, four floors dissolved, every regime remade from the ground, the royal house hunted through its own houses because no register existed to say who had held what. Two things survived: a penal and procedural code, and a tax law. And what those two had in common was not that they were wise, or just, or won by heroes. It is that each of them **constituted somebody** — advocates and lot-chosen jurors under the one, growers and tithe-collectors with standing to sue each other under the other — and each escaped the reach of any single Syracusan faction, the code by being adopted across the island, the tax law by being adopted by Rome.

The Syracusans knew which of their own works had lasted, and marked it in the way they spoke about it. When Cephalus revised the code for Timoleon, and Polydorus for King Hieron, neither was permitted the title of lawgiver. Each was called an *interpreter of the lawgiver* — because the laws of Diocles were the laws, and a man who came after could only construe them.

That is the single sentence of inheritance the case produced. Everything else had to be made again, by whoever held the rock, out of whatever was to hand.

A note on sources. This module rests on the primary material established in the preceding twelve and does not introduce new evidence; each claim is documented at the point of its first use. The principal texts behind the syntheses here are Thucydides 6.1–6.5 for the foundation and 6.32–7.87 for the Athenian expedition, in Richard Crawley's public-domain translation of 1874; Herodotus 7.153–158 for the Deinomenids, in G. C. Macaulay's of 1890; Diodorus Siculus books 11–20 for almost everything between 480 and 289, in close paraphrase with C. H. Oldfather's Loeb consulted; Aristotle, *Politics* 5.11, in Benjamin Jowett's of 1885; the pseudo-Aristotelian *Oeconomica* II for the fiscal devices; Plutarch's *Timoleon*, *Dion*, *Nicias* and *Marcellus*, in Bernadotte Perrin's and the Clough revision of Dryden, both out of copyright; Polybius 1.7–9 and 8.3–7 in W. R. Paton's of 1922; Cicero's *Verrines*, *Brutus* and *De Natura Deorum*; and Livy 24–25. The provenance problem set out in Module 7 governs the whole: Diodorus, our main source, compiled at three to four centuries' distance from Philistus, who financed and served the Dionysian tyranny and wrote his history in exile from it, and from Timaeus, whose father refounded a city out of the survivors of one a Syracusan tyrant destroyed and who was himself exiled by another, and who spent fifty years in Athens attacking Philistus. Where a figure appears in this study it is attributed, and the large round numbers are reported as indicators of

scale. The counter-position in this module is composed rather than quoted: it is my construction of the strongest case available from the arguments the sources actually contain — the necessity of concentrated command against Carthage, the material position of the Syracusan poor, the achievements of the arrangement, and the fate of the Sicilian cities that kept their constitutions — and it is not put in the mouth of any historical person. The framework tested throughout is Thomas J. Bryan's, principally *Above Warlordism*, *The Machine That Runs Itself*, *The Architect and the Inheritor*, *The Exploit*, *Position Logic*, *Elite Chaos*, and the *Patterns of Power Field Manual*; the addenda on the lens and the narrative governed the handling of the sources. Modern scholarship paraphrased and credited across the study: Franco De Angelis on Sicilian economy, demography and Greek–indigenous interaction; Robert Leighton on Sicilian prehistory; R. J. A. Talbert on Timoleon; Eric W. Robinson on Syracusan democracy; Brian Caven on Dionysius I; D. Alex Walthall on the Hieronian fiscal administration; Christopher Baron and Craige Champion on Timaeus; Eric Marsden on torsion artillery; and Michael Gagarin on early Greek law.